Youth Migration and Conflict in Artisanal and Small-scale Mining

A Case Study of Mining Communities in the Eastern Region of Ghana

Oppong Ntiri, Richard

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Richard Oppong Ntiri

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Abstract

The Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) sector has, in recent years, become the most important non-farm economic activity in mineral-rich developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa, generating employment and development for local economies (ARM, 2013). The sector, which has been described by some as being chaotic, has grown rapidly and is closely associated with migration, drawing in thousands of individuals from both far and near (Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009).

Artisanal mining camps in Ghana have, for many years, been subjected to the pressures of in-migration. Yet, to date, there has neither been an examination of how this influx affects host-migrant relations nor a critical investigation into the nexus between migration and conflict within the sector. While much literature suggests a harmonious relationship between migrant ASM operators and members of the host community, some critical observers have called for further investigation into the potential for conflict arising from migration into ASM areas. More specifically, there has been little empirical documentation of the perception and experiences of the migrants involved. The central purpose of the thesis, therefore, is to address this gap.

Using a qualitative research approach, this study explores the nature of the host-migrant relationship within ASM communities, identifies the relevant as well as incidental causes of conflicts, and seeks clarification on the measures adopted to peacefully resolve these altercations between these groups. The study examines communities that have recently seen the proliferation of intense illegal mining activity, driven by the recent siting of a large-scale mining company, and the discovery of gold in commercial quantities. Focusing on young migrant artisanal miners, a major constituent of migration, the study critically explored enquiries and observations of their activities, perceptions and experiences, to gain a deeper understanding of how the quest for a livelihood based on natural resource extraction affects and is affected by host-migrant relationships.

To

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Abbreviations

ARM	Alliance for Responsible Mining
ASM	Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining
BNDA	Birim North District Assembly
CAEMMI	Centre for African Elections Media Monitoring Index
CASM	Communities and Small-Scale Mining
CDS	Centre for Development Studies
EAG	Environmental Action Group
FCUBE	Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FHI	Family Health International
GBN	Ghana Business News
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMGC	Instrumental Model of Group Conflict
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISSER	Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research
LSM	Large Scale Mining
MYS	Ministry of Youth and Sport (Ghana)
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PNDCL	Provisional National Defence Council Law
SIT	Social Identity Theory
RGCT	Realistic Group Conflict Theory
RYL	Rural Youth Livelihoods
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Background and Context

Mining is a major economic activity in many developing countries. Over the past two decades, many of these mineral–rich countries have implemented major mining sector reforms (Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009) targeted at providing a series of financial incentives to attract foreign investors and in the process, strengthening relevant government agencies, re-drafting and enacting legislation and privatising parastatals (Morgan, 2002). Ghana is among the largest producers of gold in sub-Saharan Africa, second after South Africa (Coakley, 1998; Akabzaa and Darimani, 2001). Driven by the Bretton Woods Institutions to reform its ailing economy and capitalise on the sharp increases in gold prices, the country underwent a radical liberalisation of its mining sector during the World Bank/IMF-backed Structural Adjustment Programme in the 1980s. This included deregulation and privatization, with a very relaxed investment code accompanied by generous incentives in the sector (Adjei, 2007). These institutional reforms resulted in the influx of new foreign mining companies and multinationals and the subsequent intensification of the operations of existing ones (E.A.G, 2000; Adjei, 2007).

Alongside the expansion of large-scale mining operations, the informal artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) sector has grown dramatically over the past decade, and has been mostly chaotic (Hilson and Banchirigah, 2009). ASM has continued to expand due to the deterioration in agriculture-based livelihoods, retrenchment in the formal sector and growing impoverishment across countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Banchirigah and Hilson, 2010; Labonne, 2002). Bryceson and Jonsson (2009) reinforce the argument of Barrett et al. (2001) and Ellis (1998) that a series of push and pull factors of livelihood diversification have resulted in households, especially rural smallholder farming households, seeking alternative income-earning portfolios. And a large number of them, notably young people and women, are pursuing livelihoods in sectors with virtually no barriers to entry and exit and with very low 'start-up capital' requirements. For those in mineral-rich countries, ASM has become attractive, largely because it meets these criteria.

According to Grant et al. (2011) the myriad natural resources in sub-Saharan Africa are attractive to both internal and cross-border migrants. Most of these migrants are young people seeking "to improve their social position, to marry, to invest in housing or livestock or to start a business in their home region" (Gratz, 2009: 12). Migrants relocating to a new area often have to negotiate relationships with the indigenous community, and these can range from peaceful coexistence, based on mutual interests, to overt conflict (Chachage, 1995; Davidson, 1998; Davidson and Mendez, 2000; CDS, 2004). The literature has been wavering on the relations between these two groups, with most commentators suggesting that the relationship is mutually beneficial and complementary, others believing that

migrant youth are competitors, and the rest arguing that relationships are inherently conflictual (Hussein, 1998).

However, in most situations where different ethnic and cultural groups have come together, intergroup hostilities have occurred due to scarcity and competition over natural resources and access to land, disregard for the norms of host-guest relations and the introduction of new norms and behaviours (Homer-Dixon, 1991; Awedoba, 2009; Gratz, 2003 and 2009). Because in most instances mining activities are located within or near communities, the influx of migrants induces changes in local demographics (Hilson, 2002) and produces a series of social, cultural and political conflicts (Hruschka and Echavarría, 2011). Ayling and Kelly (1997) argue that the nature of ASM potentially induces land-use conflict due to clashes of interests over resources and contestation of rights of access. Similarly, Jacques et al. (2006) observe that conflict, particularly pertaining to water and land usage, emerged between miners and agro-pastoralists in Burkina Faso when migrant miners encroached on cash crop and pasture lands.

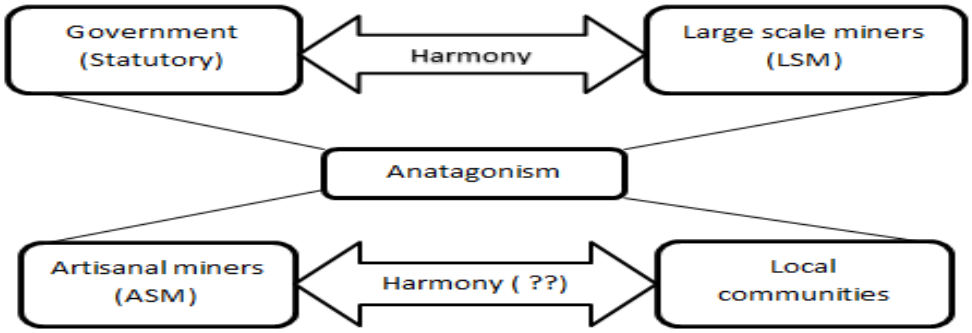
1.1 The Ghanaian Context

Like other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana is acknowledged for its highly mobile population. Internal migration "has been an important part of livelihood strategies for many years", providing its citizens with new prospects and increased opportunity to alleviate poverty and improve the standard of living (Awumbila and Tsikata, 2007: 4). Historically, the growth and development of Ghana's mining industry were propelled largely by the significant movement of population within West Africa. Evidence suggests that the industry witnessed significant immigration from neighbouring countries before and after independence in 1957. However, in recent times, mining migrants in Ghana have come not only from the West African sub-region, but from within the country as well as from outside the sub-region (Dickson and Benneh, 1988; Badu-Nyarko, 2013). For instance, the development of towns and communities near areas rich in mineral deposits has been attributed to migrants from other parts of the country diversifying from agro-pastoralism into gold mining, seeing opportunities for employment and alleviation of hardship. Presently, ASM is recognised as a pivotal economic activity in the country, with its fastest growth in the last decade. While state officials are quick to attribute the growth to a 'get-rich mentality', evidence shows that it is caused by the devastating effects of structural adjustment, poverty and wider unemployment issues, largely attracting vulnerable and impoverished segments of the population (Banchirigah, 2006).

While the conventional view is that the influx of migrants, especially youth (see Reuveny, 2008), may result in conflict, Grant et al. (2011) observe that even though migration into gold mining areas is not a recent phenomenon, it has only recently contributed to outbreaks of disputes and violent conflict. While this may be attributed to the increasing value of gold in the local, national and global economies, the phenomenon has gone relatively unexplored. It is assumed, however, that the

relationship between the indigenous mining community and ASM is harmonious, or even cordial. Nyame and Blocher (2010: 50) stated that a "cordial and in some cases a symbiotic relationship existed between artisanal miners and local communities". The assumption is that the relationship is based on "the shared socio-economic benefits derived from the partnership between the two parties [and] the various land tenure arrangements that exist between ASM operators and local communities outside the formal or statutory regime of mineral rights" (Ibid: 50). Referring to Fig 1.1 below, it shows clearly the relationships among several stakeholders within the mining sector in Ghana. Between government and the communities and ASM on one hand, and between large-scale miners and the communities and ASM on the other, the relationship is conflictual. However, the association between government- large-scale miners and ASM-local communities are harmonious (Ibid, 2010).

Fig 1.1: The Relationship Space within Ghana's Mining Sector



Source: Nyame and Blocher (2010).

Systematic violence between hosts and migrants has not been common in the country, since there are strong societal norms regarding the acceptance of newcomers, and seasonal migration has been regularised over several decades (Grant et al., 2011). However, Ghana has not been spared host-migrant conflict. Fred-Mensah (1999) found more than a score of articles on communal conflicts, mostly involving host/migrant land conflict. These conflicts centred on "defining rights of land ownership, the degree of control over land and the enforcement of existing land contracts between host land vendors and migrant landholders" (Fred-Mensah, 1999: 952). A study by CAEMMI found a strong link between conflicts and illegal mining. It notes a high degree of likely conflicts linked to illegal mining, known locally as 'galamsey', in Kenaysi, in Ahafo in the Brong Ahafo Region, and in Obuasi, Abompekrom and Dokiwa among other communities in the Ashanti Region. Mpohor Wassa in the Western Region and Akyem and New Abirem in the Eastern Region were also linked to conflict (Ghana Web, 2013). A recent content analysis by Abissath (2014) grouped galamsey-related problems into five main thematic areas including economic, socio-cultural, security and environmental degradation. Abissath (2015) found security to be at the top of the list, which included violent crimes

and the terrorising of galamsey community members.[1] There are several media reports of the uneasy tension and violence between ASM operators and host communities, with 2013 witnessing a surge in reported incidences of disputes and violence (Times, 2009; Joy News, 2013; Daily Graphic, 2013). In a word of caution, a security expert, Dr Aning, submitted that a resurgence of conflict between Fulanis and indigenes in the southern parts of the country would pale in comparison to "the next conflict in this country, which would be about galamsey and would even be more violent than the story between the Fulanis (migrants) and Agogo residents (indigenes)" (Peacefmoline, 2016).[2]

Incidentally, among the various cultures and traditions in Ghana, there is a general recognition that conflict is inevitable when people from different cultures with differing objectives share space and resources, hence the Akan proverb, 'the tongue and the teeth clash with each other' (Awedoba, 2009). Conflicts are exacerbated by rural people's tendency to regard strangers (migrants) with suspicion (Kumekpor, 2002). This study does not intend to examine areas that have long-standing ethnic conflicts, as these cannot be easily attributed to the competition for gold.[3] Rather, it will focus on areas that have recently seen intense illegal mining activity resulting from the recent siting of large-scale mining company or the discovery of gold in commercial quantities. Furthermore, the study focuses on young migrant artisanal miners, a major constituent of migration, as there is increasing speculation and literature about the potential for conflict arising from youth migration into ASM communities. However, there is little empirical documentation of how these young migrants think and feel. Thus, this thesis offers a careful inquiry into their activities, perceptions and experiences, to obtain a deeper and better knowledge of conflicts and the relationship between ASM and host communities.

1.2 Aims of the Thesis, Research Questions and Objectives

1.2.1 Aims

This study critically investigates the issues of youth, migration and ASM to improve understanding of the role that migrant youth play in ASM in the country and of the conflicts between them and members of the host community as they exploit natural resources. It also aims to examine the extent to which measures to resolve these conflicts and antagonistic relationships have been successful. The aims are to fill the gaps and to stimulate further debate on host-migrant relationships within ASM communities, with the focus on how young migrants perceive, confront and deal with potentially conflicting relationships with indigenous miners and host communities. This thesis attempts to study the sudden influx of migrants into communities which have only recently discovered gold in commercial quantities in Ghana, and it is hoped that it will inform debates about migration, ASM and conflict.

[1] http://allafrica.com/stories/201503241449.html.
[2] www.peacefmonline.com/pages/local/news/201602/269473.php.
[3] However, this is not to deny that gold has historically been linked to social conflicts in the country. See appendix 1.

1.2.2 Research Questions and Objectives

The thesis sets out to address the following research questions and objectives:

1. How is ASM structured and who are the active players?
2. What are the contextual factors that motivate the decision to migrate to undertake gold mining?
    - To identify the reasons for youth to migrate to undertake gold mining.
    - To identify the sources of information that influence the choice of where they migrate to.
3. How is the relationship between migrant youth, indigenous youth miners and other members of the host community?
    - To identify the factors that govern the relationships between migrant miners.
    - To critically assess how the migrant miners engage with members of the host community.
4. What are the relevant issues that generate conflicts (socioeconomic and cultural issues) between youth migrants and the host community?
    - To identify the leading causes of galamsey-related conflicts.
    - To gain an in-depth understanding of the triggers that lead to conflict between migrant miners and the members of the host community. Are the causes necessarily due to migration?
    - To explore perceptions of competition between migrants and indigenous groups.
    - To seek clarification on experiences of discrimination and to identify forms of ascription and labels given to migrant ASM operators.
5. What is the potential for peace between migrants and members of the host community?
    - To critically determine how young migrant miners approach building a consensus for peace with the host community. Do they avoid conflict or form coalitions of opposing forces to confront the host?
    - To identify, and undertake an in-depth analysis of, the role of actors and third party agents in resolving conflict and the effectiveness of their interventions.
    - To analyse information on the mechanisms adopted to resolve conflicts and to explore their success.
    - To assess the lessons learned.

1.3 Contribution to Knowledge

The study seeks to de-homogenise the ASM sector, paying particular attention to youth, a critical component within the ASM settings who have not been accorded the needed recognition. It is therefore hoped that it will contribute to the debate on the relationships between major stakeholders in the mining sector in Ghana. It is hoped that the thesis' findings will lead to a re-definition of the relationship between two of the major stakeholders in ASM, and that it will inform discourse on the wider interrelationships among the various stakeholders. Furthermore, it is expected that the study will improve understanding and contribute to debates on host/migrant relations, specifically within the ASM environment. While the findings may not be generalised as the likely outcome of host-migrant relations, it is further hoped that the methodology and tools of this research may be replicated in further studies to give a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between host and migrant populations. Finally, it is hoped that after taking a critical look at how conflicts, disputes and agitations might have shaped the ASM sub-sector, this study will serve as a guide to future researchers and policymakers.

1.4 Definition of Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining

The definition of ASM is made in relation to large-scale mining; in more concrete terms, ASM is everything that is not large-scale mining. The Africa Mining Vision defines ASM as "mining operations run by local enterprises, as opposed to large-scale mining operations, which are usually run by transnational companies". However, this definition is simplistic, given that it excludes individuals and groups who may not have the capacity to formalise their mining operations. The attempts of various international bodies to define ASM have failed, and this is echoed in the works of several researchers, including Veiga et al. (2006), Collins and Lawson (2014), Avila (2003), Andrew (2003) and many others. Avila (2003) opines that it would be impossible to limit the definition of ASM to any universal parameter, and that efforts to do so are counterproductive because the point of reference and basic characteristics in the various mineral-rich countries are distinctly diverse.

Over the years, though there has been an acknowledgement that a widely-accepted definition is elusive, efforts have been geared towards country-specific definitions. Andrew (2003) and Avila (2003) show that different criteria have been used by different countries to define ASM, including the nature and depth of the mine, the size of capital invested, the magnitude of the claim, the size of the workforce and the volume of sales. For instance, the size of the claim has been used in Zambia's, Zimbabwe's and Ghana's definitions, while the depth of the mine and the amount of capital invested have been the criteria in Senegal and Ethiopia. However, the choice of one criterion over another is fraught with uncertainty and apparent problems. For instance, the use of simple tools without mechanisation has been used to distinguish ASM from industrial small-scale mining. However, this distinction is rather weak as it fails to make room for the development and transformation of mining and its processes over time. There is increasing evidence that operators are gradually shifting from

basic and unsophisticated working implements to increased mechanisation, e.g. compressors, pulleys, water pumps and changfans (milling machines). No room has been made for this change over time. Similarly, a reference to ASM shows that it covers a wide spectrum of undertakings, which according to Shoko (2002: 3) could comprise activities:

> …where up to a million miners can be working on one site, to an individual …. panning for gold in the remote Regions as well as former state mining company workers or laid-off private company employees who have organised themselves into cooperatives.

This clearly defeats definitions which claim that that ASM is characterised not only by low levels of mechanisation but by high labour numbers and intensity.

Likewise, the ILO (1999: 5) also contends that ASM means different things to different people, especially to the stakeholders. While on one hand, some have classified it as "dirty, dangerous, and disruptive and should be discouraged", others have stated that "it is profitable and productive, or is simply the only way out of poverty" (UNECA, 2002: 5). Explanations of respondents' activities revealed that to them, it was a way to make ends meet, a means of attaining a livelihood from gathering and selling, rather than the ways in which various experts and international institutions have presented them. These responses corroborate the work of Hruschka and Echavarria (2011: 2), who claim that the definitions are at best utopian and academic, and that ASM is defined by the visibility of its activities, stating that "we recognise artisanal small-scale miners when we see them." Nevertheless, Avila (2003: 15) uses various parameters defined by several authors to characterise ASM (see Box 1.1).

Box 1.1: Characteristics of ASM

• Extensive usage of manual labour • Low level of mechanisation • Environmental destruction • Abysmal health and safety environment • Variable volume and size according to the mineral and the Region • Low entry barriers	• An alternative livelihood option in deprived and rural areas • Low cost of production • Invigorates local economies • Generates forward and backward linkages in the locality • Explores new deposits • Stimulates geopolitical development

Source: Avila (2003: 15) and ECLAC, taken from several publications.

The first two mining acts – the Minerals Acts of 1962 and 1965 – vested to the president of the country all minerals and mineralised lands. They branded ASM as an illegal entity, a threat to the country's resource base and an inconvenience to large-scale mining companies. Ghana finally made provision for it in the subsequent Minerals and Mining Law (PNDCL Law 153); the Minerals and Mining (Amendment) Act 1994, Act 475; the Small-Scale Gold Mining Law (PNDCL 218) in 1989;

and latterly in the Mineral and Mining Act (Act 703) in 2006. The Mineral and Mining Act of Ghana, Act 703 offered a vague definition: "mining operation over an area of land in accordance with the number of blocks prescribed". However, the Small-Scale Gold Mining Law of 1989 included financial consideration and persons employed in its definition:

> Mining of gold by any method not involving substantial expenditure by an individual or group of persons not exceeding nine in number or by a cooperative society made up of ten or more persons (Hilson and Potter, 2003: 245).

The inadequacy of the Law is further reinforced by the use of the old term 'small-scale mining', which suggests that the country has not evolved with best practices in the mining sector despite ASM, a broader term encompassing all mining operations that are not large-scale mining, being considered as a more appropriate and modern term. Similarly, in an attempt to operationalise small-scale mining, the Precious Mineral Marketing Company defines it as any mining activity occurring on a concession of up to 25 acres. In specific terms, any person or group of persons not exceeding four in number is granted up to three acres; to any group of persons not exceeding nine in number up to five acres are allocated; while a cooperative of not fewer than 10 persons is allotted a maximum of 25 acres (Ghanalegal, undated).[4] Lastly, an extension of the definition with regards to the law states that small-scale gold mining should not use explosives. However, this stipulation has been violated consistently by artisanal miners, especially those involved in underground mining, who have used explosives to loosen rocks in the pits.

While attaining a concise and exact definition of ASM within the mining sector seems impossible, for this study it is defined as "mining by individuals, groups, families, or cooperatives with minimal or no mechanization, often informally and/or illegally" (Dorner et al., 2012: 1).

1.5 Conclusion

In this introductory chapter, an overview of the background and context of gold mining in Ghana has been provided, highlighting the importance of the sector to the national economy. In a bid to capitalise on this natural resource, the country has opened its doors for investment from many foreign multinationals. But gold mining has not been solely the preserve of foreign business concerns; it has also been undertaken by local people, and their operations have grown dramatically in the past couple of decades. I show that this activity, albeit illegal, has experienced its fastest growth in this decade and is now considered one of the main informal economic activities in the country. Ostensibly, this growth has been as a result of an influx of migrants, especially youth, who have been severely affected by the IMF/World Bank Structural Adjustment Policies and general economic hardship. While migration has been linked to conflict, I highlight that this phenomenon has been relatively unexplored. There have been systematic episodes of violence between host and migrants, but because

[4] www.laws.ghanalegal.com.

these were not destructive, they have been overlooked both in research and in policy. However, there are historical antecedents of conflict between different cultures, and the inevitability of such conflict is recognised among the various traditional societies. Recently, media reports and a number of scholars have made the connection between conflict and illegal mining, with one expert claiming that this may be the most violent conflict yet to be experienced in the country. This study offers a careful enquiry and observation of migrant youth artisanal miners, and of the mining communities. It seeks to obtain an in-depth understanding of conflict *vis-à-vis* the relationship between hosts and migrants

The remainder of the chapter outlines the aim of the thesis, its research questions and objectives, and its contribution to knowledge. The last section is devoted to an in-depth search for a substantive definition of artisanal mining (ASM) for this study. Despite decades of ASM operations, an unambiguous definition has proved futile. ASM is defined by a set of characteristics and is location-specific. ASM in Ghana has been operationalised with the Small-Scale Mining Law (PNDCL 218), which conveniently excludes artisanal miners because their operations are illegal. Considering this, the study adopts the definition advanced by Dorner et al. (2012: 1), which allows an investigation of operators who are not recognised by the Ghanaian small-scale mining regime. To lay a context for the study, I review the relevant literature on the nexus between youth migration, ASM and conflict in the next chapter.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Youth Migration, Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM) and Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Critical Reflection

2.1 Overview

The past decade has seen increasing numbers of individuals and households turn to ASM, a sector considered as both a poverty-driven and poverty-alleviating activity (see Barry, 1996, Labonne, 1999). This trend is likely to grow in the face of relatively high mineral prices, the gold boom, people's awareness that their land is highly mineralised, and escalating poverty, especially in developing countries. The claim is that it attracts the:

> economically weak and vulnerable rural, and some urban populations seeking economic stability, provides the means to care for their families and offers opportunity and livelihood to those populations displaced by economic hardship, conflict, and natural disasters (Hruschka and Echavarria, 2011: 8).

The sector's contribution to socioeconomic development has come to the attention of policymakers and academics; however, governments have taken a hard line in removing those engaged in the sector illegally. Negative consequences aside, ASM activities contribute significantly to poverty reduction among miners (D'Souza, 2002), thus efforts to eradicate the activity tend to fail. Aside from its potential economic benefits, it is a growing driver of internal migration and the curtailing of rural-urban migration despite its attendant risks, uncertainty, tension and conflicts (Appel and Jonsson, 2007).

While migration has gained significant policy attention in recent years, and is expected to become even more important since the labour market is one of the few that will stay localised for the foreseeable future (Arzaghi and Rupasingha, 2011), very few studies have attempted to situate migration in the ASM debate, and fewer examine its aftereffects on people and communities. Despite recent attempts by authors including Hilson and Banchirigah (2009) to investigate the determinants of the meteoric rise in ASM in resource-rich developing countries, migration as a context in ASM studies has still not gained much attention.

Secondly, the seemingly shadowy factor of youth has been acknowledged, but not seen as significantly deserving of critical study. Understandably, youth, specifically in sub-Saharan Africa, has been a difficult category to understand and study as it is a fluid stage between childhood and adulthood, and the transition is multifaceted and dynamic. Youth studies have attracted little support (Bennell, 2007), on the assumption that young people may not face any additional problems to those of the adult population. This explains why discourse in the ASM sector has not given adequate attention to youth, instead focusing on the larger categories of farmers, workers, entrenched,

unemployed, educated etc. Most importantly, youth, who constitute a major category in migration, are given cursory recognition in ASM-related studies. Recently, the literature has reflected the changing nature of youth and has placed it as an important category (Diouf, 2003).

This chapter aims to review relevant literature on youth migration, ASM and conflicts with emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa, to provide a nuanced understanding of the links between the concepts and to lay a context for this study. As well as helping to contextualise ASM's association with youth, migration and conflicts, this review analyses various empirical literature to provide credibility and justification for the study. The first section of the review provides an understanding of youth in sub-Saharan Africa, the challenges and vulnerabilities they encounter as they transition into adulthood, and the adoption of migration to circumvent these challenges. The following sections will elaborate the links between youth migration and ASM, migration and conflict, and mining and conflict to provide a context for youth migrant-community conflict within a typical mining setting in Ghana.

2.2 Youth in sub-Saharan Africa

Youth marks one of the important phases in any person's life and development and in any human society, marking the end of childhood and the beginning of an important stage leading to adulthood (Ubi, 2007). Depending on the context, the notion of youth has been described as a homogeneous construct characterised as 'political game changers' (e.g. in the Arab Spring), as potentially dangerous, and as in need of protection from themselves and society. For sub-Saharan Africa's youth, their characterisation within social, economic and political contexts has varied over time and space. Young people find themselves in a society that is very dynamic, influenced by factors such as:

> …high-speed travel, civil war, the globalisation of commerce, democratisation of political systems, and instantaneous global communication (Blum, 2007: 231).

Cumulatively, while these factors have the advantage of propelling young people into the 'golden age of information and technology', they nevertheless expose them to serious challenges and erode the fundamental building blocks of society. Young people in sub-Saharan Africa now live in a world characterised by upheaval, due to the clash of tradition and modernity (Ibid).

However, governments in post-independence sub-Saharan Africa did not consider young people to be a problem, and as such they were largely ignored in policy and decision making (Bennell, 2000). Chigunta et al. (2005: 1) cite Argenti (2002) and de Waal (2002), in which they observed that:

> …youth as a social group largely went unnoticed or ignored, and methods of analysis and decision making of researchers and policymakers were broadly insensitive to the challenges facing young people in making the transition to economic independence.

However, decades after independence, the socioeconomic conditions of youth in sub-Saharan Africa have become the focus of mainstream development debate, with the abysmal economic performance

of these countries deeply affecting the livelihood outcomes of its citizenry, especially of young people (Chigunta et al., 2005; Curtain, 2000; Mkandawire, 2000).

Evidence from the World Bank and the IMF shows that more than one-third of the population of sub-Saharan Africa are living on less than US $1 a day, and it is vulnerable people such as women, children and youth who are adversely affected by poverty (Chigunta et al., 2005). While across the world 200 million young people are estimated to be living on less than US $1 a day, the extent of youth poverty in sub-Saharan Africa has been a subject of confusion among researchers, with some studies presuming that it is related to the poverty of households. The RYL (2003) claims that youth poverty is largely determined by the parents' wealth profile, such that if the parent is poor, the youth is considered poor. This is typically because youth are not considered as a fundamental factor in analyses of household poverty. Chigunta et al. (2005) observed that while the paucity of data limits any credible analysis on the poverty situation of sub-Saharan African youth, the majority of youth are considered disadvantaged and unable to transition successfully into adulthood due to the increase in poverty and the detrimental effects of the Structural Adjustment Programme.

The words of Kofi Annan are particularly significant: "A society that cuts itself off from its youth severs its lifeline; it is condemned to bleed to death" (Opening Address of the World Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth, Lisbon, 8 August 1998).[5] While this statement recognises the importance of youth as a critical factor in national development (UNFPA, 2012), youth are largely framed negatively in both policy and practice. They constitute a majority of the population in sub-Saharan Africa, yet they have been accorded low priority socially, economically and politically (Chinsinga and Chasukwa, 2013). A typical review of youth policies across the sub-continent reveals that youth have generally been regarded as a canker on society. In one such review, Anyidoho et al. (2012) highlighted six youth policy narratives, namely youth as the nation's future; youth as unemployed and underemployed; youth as marginalised and vulnerable; youth as deviants; youth as a population problem; and youth as future farmers. According to Wesis (1989), though framing in itself influences the possible choice of solutions, these attributes tend to reflect the perception of the assessors. An assessment of the framework identified above reveals the negative, and at times condescending, attitude and perception of 'adult originators'. Te Lintelo (2012: 20), in reinforcing this perception, states that youth are regarded as "token young persons, condescended to and being present but not heard".

However, the extent to which youth are integrated into the various organs of a nation invariably determines its dynamism and growth (Braungart and Braungart, 1989). The resolution of the UN General Assembly during the International Youth Year 1985 recognised the invaluable contribution that youth can make by directing their energies and creativity into shaping their future as well as that

[5] http://www.un.org/events/youth98/speeches/sgyouth2.htm.

of society. However, young people face huge obstacles in developing their economic and social potential. This is a result of an absence of avenues and resources, leaving youth deprived of the opportunity to contribute to nation-building. With the expansion of the youth cohort, young people across sub-Saharan Africa are increasingly turning to crime, violence, gangs and other socially unacceptable practices to survive (Braungart and Braungart, 1989). While a large number of young people could also present an opportunity for positive social innovation and change, their quality of life to a large extent depends on the opportunities that are available to them as well as on how they cope with the transition to adulthood and on awareness of their unique position.

While researchers in the developed world, particularly in Europe, have conceptualised youth primarily in terms of social reproduction via occupation and education (Bynmer, 2001), Mkandwire (1996) finds much confusion surrounding the concept of youth in Africa. De Boeck and Honwana (2005: 3) note that here, due to the different positions they assume, youth has been "difficult to grasp and pin down analytically". Kanyenze et al. (1999:2) acknowledge that the classification of youth is contingent upon which attribute of youth is paramount, be it "demographic (age), cultural (notions of adulthood), biological (attainment of puberty), social (attainment of 'maturity' or marriageability) or economic (ability to sustain oneself)". While Braungart and Braungart (1989) assert that in most societies, age is the cardinal factor in demarcating the various transitional pathways, and authors like Blum (2007) and Putnam (2000) state that adulthood follows the termination of education, Chigunta (2002) determines the point at which adulthood is reached by the ability of the individual to enter into a legally binding or socially recognisable marriage. Eguavoen (2010) elaborates on Chigunta (2000), asserting that youth is a cohort of individuals between the phase of 'childhood and adulthood', suggesting that these are persons who have not set up their own homes, who depend on their parents for their livelihood, and more importantly, who do not have the means to enter into marriage. Thus, whatever age a person has attained, their inability to sustain a marriage for one reason or another will identify them as a youth. In some parts of sub-Saharan Africa, Senegal, Mali and Burkina Faso for instance, it is quite common for a girl to be considered as an adult once she is married, while a 40-year-old man who is unmarried and living with his parents is deemed a youth (Mkandwire, 1996; Chigunta, 2002).

In recent times, most sub-Saharan African states have defined youth in terms of age, but there has been no convergence, with the age-range conceptualised and applied differently depending on the context (Ikelegbe and Garuba, 2011). Table 2.1 below gives a clear indication of the divergent views among countries in sub-Saharan Africa on the definition of youth by chronological age. For instance, in many African countries, it is not uncommon for youth to begin at an early age. Referring to Table 2.1 five countries consider the onset of youth to be age 12. Chigunta et al. (2005) quote Bynmer (1997) that in these countries the transition into adulthood is completed between the ages of 25 and 30, whereas countries like Ghana, South Africa and Kenya place this at around 35.

Table 2.1: A Summary of the Range and Voting Ages of Youth in selected sub-Saharan African Countries

COUNTRY	AGE RANGE OF YOUTH	VOTING AGE
Botswana	12-29	21
Ghana	15-35	18
Kenya	15-35	18
Lesotho	12-35	18
Malawi	14-25	18
Mauritius	14-25	18
Mozambique	18-35	18
Namibia	15-30	18
Nigeria	12-30	18
Seychelles	15-30	18
Sierra Leone	15-30	18
South Africa	15-35	18
Swaziland	12-30	18
Tanzania	15-35	18
The Gambia	12-30	18
Uganda	18-30	18
Zambia	15-25	18
Zimbabwe	15-30	18

Adapted from Chigunta, 2002; Mkandwire, 1996

The extended age-range in sub-Saharan Africa is influenced by a variety of factors. For instance, while in the developed world, the completion of education marks the end of youth, in sub-Saharan Africa this is one indicator among several. These include the ability to achieve economic independence from one's parents and to gain a livelihood, as well as the capacity to acquire the capital to sustain a marriage (Chigunta, 2002). Even though youth in sub-Saharan Africa may exhibit varied characteristics, "their commonality is their ambiguous position in between childhood and adulthood, a position which in recent years … has become increasingly difficult to situate" (Langevang, 2007: 268). They are portrayed 'as a lost generation' (O'Brien, 1996 c.f. Langevang, 2007) due to years of declining economic fortunes disrupting transitional pathways; Langevang (2007) opines that sub-

Saharan Africa's youth have been stuck in the same phase over years, incapable of independently sustaining a family and themselves, or lacking the skills and education needed to attain the means and capital to be classified as adults.

While youth is universally regarded as a transitory stage between childhood and adulthood, it is clear from the review that a collective definition is yet to be achieved. For the purpose of this study, the definition of youth should be specific to the area of the study. This study thus adopts the definition of the Ghanaian government and the African Union, which define youth as "persons who are within the age bracket of fifteen (15) and thirty-five (35)" (MYS, 2010).

2.2.1 Challenges and Vulnerabilities of Youth

Even though youth in sub-Saharan Africa make up the majority of the population (Frederiksen and Munive, 2010) and actively participate in the development of their societies, they are often side-lined, and their views and aspirations are not accounted for in decision making (De Boeck and Honwana, 2005). Often the rhetoric has labelled youth simultaneously as creative and destructive forces or as a marginal and dependent category, considered a danger to themselves and a problem for society (Waldie, 2004). This reinforces the notion that society's perception of youth determines the extent to which they are included and represented, and how their issues are dealt with (Mabala, 2011).

Youth in Africa have largely been viewed negatively, which places them in a particularly vulnerable position. With limited or no access to education, health care or livelihood opportunities, their situation is even more acute and often embroiled in violence, crime, political struggle and one crisis after another (De Boeck and Honwana, 2005). Often, media coverage and analyses of the role of youth in the socioeconomic and political development agenda portray them not only as victims inhibited by the structures of society, but also as security threats. This is due to their resorting to violence to make their voices heard and to change their socioeconomic and political circumstances (Frederiksen and Munive, 2010). The paradox of youth is that on one hand, they are marginalised, dependent and helpless, seeking to occupy adult-dominated positions and activities, while on the other they appear active, rebellious and full of authority. Unfortunately, in whichever context youth are placed, they are at the "mercy and manipulation of society, its elites and elders" (Ikelegbe and Garuba, 2011: 127). However, to assert themselves, youth have increasingly developed innovative economic strategies, often frowned upon and opposed by society (Eguavoen, 2010). Evidence gathered by the UN (2011) suggests that aggrieved youth are likely to challenge any opposition that seeks to exclude and marginalise them, a situation witnessed recently in the Arab Spring in the north of Africa and in civil unrest in most parts of sub-Saharan Africa.

Are the negative perceptions of youth of their own making or a self-fulfilling prophecy of negative stereotyping? Mabala (2011: 170) states that "Of course, youth in themselves are not the problem"; they are continually sidestepped in decision making and their concerns are disregarded, and there is a

tendency to foment agitations and unrest as young people, in most cases, are invariably positioned at the helm "of denunciations of injustice and demands for reform" (Mabala, 2011: 170). A report by the UN DESA and the World Bank (2007) contends that young people are particularly vulnerable because they are still immature, and this can lead them to turn to alternative sources of support, such as gangs or military organizations, in times of family breakdown triggered by economic crises.

In their article on Youth Vulnerabilities and Adaptation, Pereznieto et al. (2011) conclude that populations in the developing world, particularly youth, bear the brunt of the recent economic turmoil emanating from the Western world. Though armed with limited evidence, they claim sufficient indication of the effects of past economic decline on youth, their well-being and livelihood opportunities to conclude that the current crisis will substantially impact on youth. Youth, as earlier noted, are largely without a voice and 'invisible' in many African societies, leaving them with serious vulnerabilities, including increasing unemployment, underemployment and disillusionment. This leaves them disproportionately affected by the knock-on effects of the economic crisis (ILO, 2005). Reinforcing the argument of Chigunta (2002), Pereznieto et al. predict that the problems of African youth will further deepen due to the rapid social change and economic meltdown being experienced by most sub-Saharan African countries.

Consequently, attempts by youth to improve their livelihood opportunities are plagued with specific challenges that prevent a smooth transition to adulthood. Fundamentally, in all societies the youth phase is the period of forming and building the needed human capital for the future. The decisions, skills, knowledge and responsibilities acquired not only prepare youth for a more fulfilling adult life, but go a long way to benefit the society (UN, 2007). While youth livelihood is a step towards adulthood and an independent life, in most instances, youth have lacked control over critical issues that affect their well-being (Bennell, 2000). The overwhelming majority of youth in sub-Saharan Africa are marginalised, poorly educated and poor, and most often their needs are overlooked.

While the assertion is that young people hold the potential to accelerate economic progress, reduce poverty and provide a foundation for reform and innovation, they have not been able to contribute to national development; this is largely due to their particular challenges and vulnerabilities not being addressed by government policies and programmes (Agbor et al., 2011; UNFPA, 2012). Frederiksen and Munive (2010) found that the adoption of neoliberal policies by sub-Saharan African countries has impacted severely on youth, with the majority being unable to transition successfully to adulthood. Though these difficulties are not unique to young people in sub-Saharan Africa, their progress is hindered and made much more arduous by dismal economic growth and low investment in infrastructure, education and health, as well as by unemployment and poverty across the region (UN, 2007).

The UN factsheet on Youth and Education notes that:

> Education is central to development and the improvement of the lives of young people globally, and has been identified as a priority area in many internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and the World Programme of Action for Youth.

A subsequent UN report on Youth in Africa in 2011 acknowledges that in recent times, literacy and education, especially primary school enrolment, have improved substantially across sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, enrolment rates in primary education increased from 58 percent to 76 percent between 1999 and 2008 in Western, Central and Southern Africa (UN, 2011). Ironically, though Africa's youth have attained a higher level of education than their parents did a couple of decades ago, they have been unable to sustain themselves due to the lack of employment opportunities. In a study by Chigunta (2002), youth questioned the relevance of school, which until recently was considered as the surest means of climbing the socioeconomic ladder. They claim that education is 'useless and irrelevant' to their livelihoods, since they have been unable to secure jobs after completing many years of schooling. This situation has triggered a relatively high school dropout rate among youth in sub-Saharan Africa (Ibid).

Furthermore, employment (notably formal employment) remains a major challenge for young people in sub-Saharan Africa. Figures by the UN (2011) estimate unemployment rates at above 20 percent in most sub-Saharan African countries, including Ghana, Zambia, South Africa and Algeria. The ILO (2010) points out that the problems of youth in sub-Saharan Africa are greater due to the relatively high degree of working poverty and underemployment. For example, data by the Ghana Statistical Service indicates that the unemployment rate amongst 15–24 year olds was significantly higher at 25.6 percent, compared to 12.9 percent of those aged between 25 and 44, and three times higher than those aged 45–64. A recent World Bank report found that 48 percent of youth between 15 and 24 years were unemployed (Citifm, 2016).[6] It may also be argued that the youth unemployment problem in Ghana is a consequence of poor macroeconomic performance over the past 50 years.[7]

The problem of chronic youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa is widely acknowledged against the backdrop of the most youthful region of the world (Valle and Klemmer, 2011 and te Lintelo, 2012a). The paradox is that despite a range of resolute attempts in policies and actions, the problem of youth unemployment continues to worsen. For example, youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa has risen from 7.4 to 12.8 percent over the past decade (Chinsinga and Chasukwa, 2013). A disappointment in the agricultural sector, considered the mainstay of most sub-Saharan African countries, has been its inadequacy to resolve rural unemployment, poverty and food insecurity. Radwan (2007) observes a downward trend in the sector's contribution to employment. While one of the key targets of African Union's "Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009 – 2018)" is a significant

[6] http://citifmonline.com/2016/05/12/48-ghanaian-youth-jobless-world-bank
[7] http://allafrica.com/stories/200601100100.html.

reduction in youth unemployment by 2 percent per annum, with half of the decade gone there has not been much of an improvement in the youth unemployment situation. Year-on-year evidence shows that the number of young people in Africa surpasses the number of jobs created (Page, 2013). The predicament of youth has worsened with the public sector creating insufficient jobs for the teeming youth population and with increased competition in the informal sector (te Lintelo, 2012).

Min-Harris (2009) writes that among the youth populace in sub-Saharan Africa, rural youth are most disproportionately affected by poverty, since they are the most disadvantaged. Her study reveals that compared to their urban compatriots, youth in rural areas are often unable to break the cycle of poverty, experiencing higher levels of unemployment and underemployment, limited infrastructure development, lack of resources and poor educational opportunities. Aptly, Carling (2013) states that millions of young adult Africans are unable to undertake the passage into adulthood and find themselves stuck as youths. Vigh (2010: 145) calls this "a social moratorium…. a socio-temporal space characterised by economic, social and political marginalisation"; a situation youth are trying to escape from this. The aforementioned acknowledge that the threats facing youth are clear and present, and will worsen over time if the economic fortunes of sub-Saharan Africa's states do not improve in the near future.

Migration presents a way for young people to break away from the cycle of poverty, acquire skills and accumulate enough capital to ease the cost of successful transition to adulthood (Min-Harris, 2009). Specifically, migration, especially for young people, should not be classified only as a means of escaping economic deterioration and poverty, but as a chance to improve their status in society (Ibid: 161). Estimates indicate that youth and working-age populations (aged 15-64) in Africa have more than doubled from 251.2 million to 582 million in the past decade and are expected to reach 937 million in 2030. The rapid expansion of the youth and working populations is projected to lead to an increase in migration (UNCEA, 2010).

The discussion so far has reviewed the situation of youth in sub-Saharan Africa and the problems of transitioning to adulthood, which are influenced by several challenges prompting migration (especially rural youth who bear the brunt of poverty), yet not much is known about the experiences of young migrants or about their opportunities and struggles. The next part of the discussion critically looks at the dimensions of, and trends in, migration, to establish where the youth migrate to, and to place into context the link between migration and ASM.

2.2.2 Youth, Migration and Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining (ASM)

Migration, both internal and international, has been considered an integral part of the current global economy, with significant development and poverty implications for individuals and their families, for areas of origin and destination areas, and for national economies (Siddiqui, 2012). Migration is part of an individual's or a household's strategy for economic improvement through diversification, to

alleviate pressure on resources (Jonsson, 2010) and to mitigate high degrees of vulnerability caused by seasonality and risk (Ellis, 2003). Comparatively, many rural households in the developing world choose to migrate when resources have been dissipated or are no longer able to provide sustenance. Guest (2006) opines that this enables individuals and households to maximise their return to human capital. The literature is emphatic that the overall benefit of migration is significantly higher as earning potential increases due to myriad opportunities in the receiving area (Newland, 2003). Similarly, aside from the benefits to the individual, remittances can help generate investments in new ventures for households as well as providing income security when households are faced with adverse income shocks (Wouterse and Taylor, 2006).

Africa has been characterised as "the continent with the most mobile populations in the world" in the World Migration Report of 2005 (IOM, 2005: 33). For instance, Anarfi et al. (2003) found that Ghana has had a long-standing tradition of migration, with a majority of the ethnic groups claiming to have settled from elsewhere. However, in terms of magnitude and impact, youth in sub-Saharan Africa constitute a major component of the migrant population (Min-Harris, 2009). Garasky (2002) says that periods of economic crisis such as the 1980s witnessed many working-age youth migrating from rural areas. A study by Cromartie (2000) showed that young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 were the most mobile, comprising nearly 30 percent of persons moving out of rural areas. Similarly, Guest (2006) found that young adults dominate internal migrant populations, with the highest migration rates in the 20–24 and 25–29 age brackets for males and females respectively. In Africa, young people aged 20 to 29 dominate the migration streams, both internally and internationally, and poverty has been cited as the dominant factor (GLSS, 2008; UNECA, 2010).

In 1994, the ILO estimated the number of people living outside their birth country at 80–100 million; this number increased dramatically to about 215 million people in 2010 (ILO, 1994; World Bank, 2010). However, for reasons including unavailability of data and difficulty in setting boundaries beyond which a move is considered internal, internal migration has been next to impossible to estimate globally (King et al., 2008). But the magnitude of internal migrants in developing countries, especially in Asia, far outstrips that of international migration (Ping and Pieke, 2003). In Africa, and specifically in Ghana, a study by Adams (2007) found that the number of internal migrants (12.2 percent) far exceeded international migrants (3.8 percent). Similarly, using figures on urbanisation as indicative of the scale of internal migration, King et al. (2008: 3) maintain that:

> Over the century-span 1900-2000 the number of people living in cities increased more than twenty-fold from 262 million (163 million in developed countries, 99 million in developing countries) to 2856 million (882 million in the developed and 1974 million in the developing world) and in the developing world of Asia, Africa and Latin America approximately 40 percent of urbanisation is by internal migration.

They argue that migration is internally driven. Similarly, Afolayan et al. (2009) observed that Nigeria's national capital and regional capitals and trade hubs were inundated with migrants from various regions of the country in the latter part of the 20th century.

With the majority of inhabitants of developing countries located in rural areas, the largest proportion of migrants is found in these areas, and, more specifically, moves within these areas (de Haan, 1999). In sub-Saharan Africa, internal migration, especially the migration of labour from and within rural areas and thereby from the rural non-farm sector, has been a critical factor of economic development. (Gisbert, 2007). Nwajiuba (2005) notes that migration in sub-Saharan Africa occurs predominantly among rural and poor people, while Black et al. (2004) assert that most migrants are driven by poor agricultural yields and famine to move temporarily or seasonally, often in search of richer lands or remunerated jobs in towns.

Spatially, while there are varied forms of migration, including "urban-rural, urban-urban, rural-rural and rural-rural", the latter dominates in many poor countries because it can be undertaken with less investment (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004: 3). Despite its dominance, rural-rural migration is ignored by policymakers and academics alike. Part of the explanation, according to Lucas (1997), lies in the lack of data, though this, in itself, is also a reflection of lack of attention. The other part is the apparent visibility of urban population growth. However, where analysis is possible, evidence shows that rural-rural migration far exceeds rural-urban migration, but even then, the rural sector is portrayed as homogenous, offering no apparent benefit. Similarly, a case can be made that rural-rural migration has not been accorded much prominence because it is the preserve of the poor and least educated. Despite the limited studies on internal migration, Deshingkar and Grimm (2004) observe an increase in the number of people relocating as livelihoods have diversified due to the impact of the Structural Adjustment Programme.

Similarly, Potts (1995) cites the growing incidence of return migration or urban-rural migration, whereby urban residents move to rural areas. She argues that the movement back to villages was attributable to the impact of structural adjustment, as evidenced in the retrenchment of workers in countries including Uganda and Zambia in the later part of the 1980s and in the 1990s (in Potts 1995 c.f. Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004). In Ghana, the GLSS 5 (2008) reveals that rural areas were the ultimate destinations of most migrants, with about 33 percent moving from urban to rural areas, whilst 28 percent moved from rural areas to other rural communities, and fewer than 6 percent settled in urban areas. Ellis (2003) claims that due to the cost involved in migrating, especially to more distant locations, the higher the initial outlay, the more the poor migrate internally (engaging in seasonal, circular and step migrations).

Many young people leave their homes and families in search of jobs and a better life elsewhere; however, they have been unable to secure gainful employment due to lack of qualifications and skills

(UNCEA, 2010). The question is: what activities do they engage in when they migrate, or more appropriately, where do they find employment? A study by Chidoko and Makuyana (2012) shows where most of the unemployed in sub-Saharan Africa find employment. They stress, for instance, that impoverishment and high poverty after massive retrenchments in Zimbabwe forced many redundant workers to seek jobs in the informal sector, which is characterised by low levels of skill, capital and technology. A report by the ARM (2013) found that most of the workforce in sub-Saharan Africa was in the informal sector; this is estimated at over 60 percent of the total working populace.

Meagher (1995) points out that many households are now earning a substantial part of their incomes from the informal sector due to loss of jobs and a fall in real incomes because of structural adjustment. Similar arguments are made by Rogerson (1997), who asserts that the implementation of economic recovery programmes led to significant urban job losses across sub-Saharan Africa, with more people venturing into the informal economy. Consequently, the informal sector has been regarded as the 'lender of last resort', mopping up the surplus workforce as a result of the formal sector not creating enough jobs. (Wells and Wall, 2003; African Union, 2008). In Ghana, ISSER (1995) estimates that between 1960 and 1990 employment figures in the non-agricultural sectors increased from just over one million to almost three million, indicating an increase of the informal sector's share from 68 percent to well over 90 percent. The World Bank (2001) concurs that about 89 percent of the total workforce in Ghana were engaged in the informal economy. The IMF (2012) held that the growth in the capacity of the informal sector lent credence to its ability to provide a livelihood for the mass of unemployed people and to contribute to national development.

Table 2.2 below illustrates country-specific indications of the growth of the informal economy in sub-Saharan Africa.

Table 2.2: Country-Specific Indications of Growth in the Informal Sector

Country	Growth in the Informal Sector
Angola	The size of the informal sector increased by 25 percent in the 1990s
Cameroun	In 1992, 80 percent of all jobs were created in the informal economy
Mozambique	Households depending on the informal sector grew by more than 30 percent
Tanzania	The informal economy contributed 33 percent of GDP in 1990
Zambia	The informal sector employed about 43 percent of the total workforce
Zimbabwe	1.56 million people were employed in the informal sector, exceeding the 1.26 million people employed by the state

Source: ILO (2002)

The literature has established that the size of the informal sector is positively correlated to the level of unemployment, as shown in a study by Boughzala and Kouki (2003), who show that a large informal economy is an indication of persistent unemployment. Additionally, the ILO (2009) proffer that the persistent increase in poverty in sub-Saharan Africa is linked to its employment structure, with its informality and low labour productivity. The informal economy is now recognised as the leading, and in most cases the only, avenue of employment for many workers. Young people, who were hitherto assured a state job, have found in recent years that guarantees of employment in the informal sector were reduced. In their survey of ten developing countries, the ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013 showed that though work in the informal sector was irregular and low paid, it offered perhaps the greatest chance for youth to ever attain a decent livelihood. The sector attracts a majority of young people, providing the opportunity of legitimate work and the potential to contribute as citizens, entrepreneurs and future leaders (ILO, 2013).

In relation to ASM, a report by CASM (2005) observes that it languishes in the informal sector. Similarly, in 1990 the ILO adopted the resolution that "ASM in the informal sector is an important phenomenon in many parts of the world", arguing that it is associated more with the informal sector than the formal sector (Jennings, 1999: 4). Similarly, the ARM (2013) associates ASM with informality; increasing numbers have sought to diversify their livelihoods due to harsh economic conditions and the impact of structural adjustment, which has increased unemployment and decreased rural livelihood choices (UNCEA, 2003). Recent works across sub-Saharan Africa and most developing countries endowed with mineral deposits attest that the scale of ASM activities has grown dramatically, stimulated by structural adjustment and economic liberalisation (ILO, 1999, Laboone,

2002; Fisher, 2007). Indeed, Banchirigah (2006) acknowledges that the economic recovery programme has not only increased the presence of large-scale mining companies in many mineral-endowed areas, but has also propelled expansion in the scale of ASM.

Banchirigah (2006: 166) further acknowledges that expansion in ASM culminated in:

> …a dual mining economy in sub-Saharan Africa: on one hand a flourishing large-scale mining sector comprised predominantly of foreign players, while on the other hand, an expanding ASM sector controlled by indigenous groups.

Maconachie and Hilson (2011: 298) added to this duality in their illustration of Ghana's mining sector, emphasising that it has evolved into "a 'tri-sector' economy, comprised of foreign-propelled large-scale gold mining; licensed small-scale gold mining; and burgeoning illegal artisanal gold mining", after the introduction of formalisation policies. Reinforcing the World Bank's report (1992) condemning the differential and unequal policies imposed on ASM and large-scale mining, Maconachie and Hilson (2011) conclude that the rise in the latter is due to the application of different policies for ASM and large-scale mining.

The attraction of ASM is witnessed in the number of people joining the sector, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and this trend is likely to continue, with certain parts seeing a tripling of operations (MMSD, 2002). Dreschler (2001: 131) observed that in areas endowed with gold and other precious minerals, ASM is considered a favourable activity, representing "the fast track process to their earthly riches". It has been argued that ASM attracts those seeking to get rich; however, evidence suggests that most people consider the sector as a means to end their poverty. With mounting poverty and the attraction of potential wealth due to rising commodity prices, the number of ASM operators continues to escalate (Hinton, 2005). Hoadley and Limpitlaw (2004) and Kuma (2010) agree that in periods of economic crisis and scathing poverty, the majority of people in mineral-rich developing countries diversify into ASM since it offers not only a means to alleviate poverty, but it also provides sustenance for both rural and some urban inhabitants.

In recent years, the rapid expansion of the ASM sector has attracted much interest among scholars. Hilson and Garforth (2012) provide a detailed description, and advance two distinct propositions on the expansion of the sector. On one hand (and this has informed policies) is the 'get rich quick' narrative – the lure of fast money. This is attributed to a growing number of scholars who believe that ASM is a 'rush-type' activity (Banchirigah and Hilson, 2010). For examples, see: Mwaipopo et al., (2004); Havnevik et al., (2007); Maconachie and Binns, (2007); Cartier, (2009); Gratz, (2009); Banchirigah and Hilson, (2010); and Hilson and Garforth, (2012). This narrative continues to feature in donor circles (Hilson, 2009), and it is advanced as an explanation of the rush of young people into the sector (Mohan, 2000). Typically viewed as the 'demand-pull' model, it claims that people are pulled to the sector expecting supernormal economic prospects (Hilson, 2009).

On the other hand, is the poverty-driven narrative which has recently emerged in the literature. Described as 'distress-push', it claims that many people are turning to ASM in a bid to improve their economic prospects and to eliminate poverty (Hilson, 2009). Although policymakers are yet to fully embrace this idea, evidence shows that in the past decade, the majority of people, especially farmers and urban returnees, have moved into ASM, typically overwhelmed by personal hardship (see Hilson and Gartforth, 2012; Banchirigah and Hilson, 2010). However, studies by Owusu and Dwomoh (2012) show that both narratives could be interlinked, especially regarding the motivation for young people engaging in ASM. Their research shows that poverty, ignorance and a get-rich-quick attitude among young people have been identified as the motivating factors for illegal mining activities in the Kwaebibirem District in Ghana (Owusu and Dwomoh, 2012).

Kitula (2006) acknowledges that in the Geita District of Tanzania, ASM is not only attracting locals, who engage in it as a primary activity, but also people from neighbouring regions due to poor agricultural yields, underemployment and unemployment and the need to augment household incomes during lean seasons. In Burkina Faso, ASM became a critical component of the rural economy in the later part of the 1980s, when inhabitants engaged in gold mining in a bid to survive following severe famine which destroyed their ability to provide sustenance for themselves and their families. Currently, ASM in Burkina Faso is an important economic activity, with a majority of rural people abandoning farming and engaging in ASM all year long (Gueye, 2001).

The overarching view elaborated so far is that poverty, unemployment and underemployment drive young people into ASM. Various scholars have, however, unearthed the underlying reasons for these factors, including the impact of reforms (Banchirigah, 2006; Hilson and Potter, 2005; Bryceson) and agricultural poverty (Hilson and Gartforth, 2012, 2013, Banchirigah and Hilson, 2010, Kamlongera and Hilson, 2011), making the sector attractive to millions of young people. However, for some young people, migration in general, and to ASM communities in particular, can positively change their circumstances. For others, it may be wrought with negative sentiments and a new set of challenges: problems with socioeconomic integration, prejudice and exploitation, risk and conflicts. These may be detrimental to their livelihoods in the long term.

Similarly, the act of migrating could be mundane, until the host region reacts. The reaction of the receiving state is regarded as the major determinant of whether migration would engender conflict. For instance, conflict may arise in situations where migrants are blamed for pre-existing problems in the host country or where migration increases competition for resources. The continuing influx places pressure on the sustainability of destination counties, with the potential to generate and exacerbate conflict between hosts and immigrants (UNCEA, 2010; Populationmatters.org, 2013).

2.3 The Migration-Conflict Nexus: A Critical Reflection

The saying, "If you can't beat them, join them, and if you can't join them, beat them" (McGraw-Hill, 2002) prompts Hausken (2000: 1) to pose the question of the underlying principle by which agents/groups decide to beat or join other groups. Hausken set out to examine the relationship between migration and conflict and the conditions in which migration could pose a serious threat to a group's existence and survival. Intriguingly, this has been a fundamental part of man's existence; Akanji (2012) recounts that humanity has always experienced migration and conflict, which have invariably contributed to the making and shaping of peoples and societies.

Conflict is innate in human interaction at individual, communal and national levels (Akanji, 2012). Sniderman et al. (2004) hold that conflict between groups is one of the oldest institutions, dating back as far as the era of Aristotle, and is embedded and accentuated over differences of interests. Similarly, migration has also been part of humanity since time immemorial (Parker, 2007). By nature, we are designed to be mobile, moving to survive, in search of better opportunities and for sustenance, from one location to another. Acknowledged as a "process by which different ethnic, cultural, language, religions and groups have come into contact" (Hugo, 2005: 2), migration has, in the last few decades, permeated every sector of society; it has economic, social and political dimensions and involves people from diverse backgrounds and differences of ethnicity, race, gender, age, religion and ideology (Hristoski and Sotiroski, 2012: 1).

Earlier academic literature was limited to international migration, with movement within the boundaries of a country categorised as population redistribution or urbanization (Skeldon, 2003; IOM, 2005). Internal migration, as observed earlier, has apparently been neglected because it was 'less visible' and 'less documented'. However, in recent years it has assumed importance as scholars have recognised that the scale of movement within national borders far exceeds international migration. They note that the majority of migrants move only a short distance; validating Ravenstein's First Law of Migration some 120 years ago (Bakewell, 1996; Skeldon, 2003).

Migration, whether internal or international, is considered not only a means to sustain or establish a better livelihood, but also as an opportunity for people to improve their status and to alleviate economic hardship (Tigno, 2006). There are many positive aspects of migration, including increasing population concentration, relocation of surplus labour and a ready market for goods and services; however, migration in Africa is born mostly from poverty and social disturbance, and has been seen as a major destabilizing and disruptive social or demographic process (Cross and Omoluabi, 2006).

Adepoju (2002: 2) observed that migration in Africa has often been a response to factors such as demographic and environmental changes, conflicts, economic decline due to economic recovery programmes and political destabilisation. Diop and D'Aloisio (2005) state that pull (linked to destination areas, including better opportunities, higher earnings and improved access to resources)

and push (linked to sending areas, including conflict and political instability and lack of economic and employment opportunities) factors categorise migration patterns in Africa. The push-pull framework, one of the dominant neoclassical theories, postulates that migration is generally an individual decision of those pushed out of regions experiencing worsening conditions and pulled into regions with comparatively favourable conditions. However, Awubila et al. (2008) aver that migration in Africa has been linked to the decisions of families or households, with poorer households and communities recognising that their survival is hinged on their ability to send their members to more prosperous localities in pursuit of vital resources.

The beginning of the twenty-first century witnessed an increase in the debate on migration, especially in the developed world, amidst fears of the destabilizing effects of the increasing tide of migrants from the developing world. This is reflected in mainstream migration policies, which have changed over the years. Migration as a contributory factor in the development of migratory (both origin and destination) areas has since given way to the view that pressure from migration can longer be sustained. The change in migration policy, especially in the West, comes in the wake of the current acceleration in migration worldwide, with more than 232 million people currently estimated to be residing abroad (UN, 2013).

The focus of the debate in sub-Saharan Africa once dwelt on migration's debilitating effect on the populace in urban areas as well as the brain-drain of well-educated and professionals to the developed world. However, the distinctive form of migration in sub-Saharan Africa has changed dramatically over the years (Adepoju, 2006). Migration in the sub-region is now dynamic and is dominated by a diverse cross-section of:

> …temporary cross-border workers, female traders and farm labourers, professionals, clandestine workers and refugees and are essentially intra-regional, short term and male dominated, in response to the interdependent economies of neighbouring countries (Adepoju, 2005: 2).

In times, past, migration predominantly involved the search for new lands, safe and secure for both farming and habitation (Adepoju, 2005), and communities in sub-Saharan Africa welcomed and accepted immigrants into their fold and assisted and shared resources with them. In recent times, however, the unprecedented increase in the number of migrants has led to xenophobia, hostility and rejection. Migrants are viewed with suspicion; they are often made scapegoats in times of decline in local production economies, they are stigmatised as criminals, rioted against for undercutting wages and crowding indigenes out of jobs, and accused of spreading diseases (WCC, 1988; Adepoju, 2003; Campbell, 2003). IDASA (2008) raises the concern that the rise in migration poses a danger to national identity, instituting a divide between those who 'belong' and those who do not. A good illustration is the notion of nationalism, which has emerged in the Cote D'Ivoire in recent times,

represented by the concept of 'Ivoirité', which has engendered and entrenched political and ethnic unrest in the country (OECD, 2012).

Attempts to alienate persons not indigenous to a particular area and to curtail the free movement of persons in sub-Saharan Africa, for instance in West Africa, began in the aftermath of independence. Newly independent states enacted migration laws and regulations in a deliberate attempt to control and curtail the free movement of migrants, preserving national identity and protecting jobs for their citizens (Adepoju, 2005). Among the salient laws and rules were "the Immigration Act (1963), Immigration (Amendment) Act (1973) and Immigration Manuals and Regulations (1972) in Nigeria, and the Immigration Quota System and issue of work permits in Sierra Leone" (Ibid: 4). Similarly, a more hostile attempt involved the expulsion and deportation of undocumented migrants already resident in the country. Adepoju (1995, 2005) and Makinwa-Adebusoye (1995) comment that these expulsions were pervasive throughout West Africa, especially in well-to-do countries. Ghana, Cote D'Ivoire and Nigeria, among many others, undertook a systematic deportation of non-nationals from the late 1950s through to the 1980s. Campbell (2003) writes that Ghana and Nigeria initially accepted migrants, and expelled them when their economic fortunes changed and unemployment rose. The largest documented deportation was between 1983 and 1985, when Nigeria deported 1.5 million migrants, mostly Ghanaians.

Xenophobia is defined as "a negative attitude toward, or fear of, individuals or groups of individuals that are in some sense different (real or imagined) from oneself or the group(s) to which one belongs" (Hjerm, 1998: 341), and denotes a resentment of anything not indigenous, including individuals, groups and cultures. The term is generic and not specific to this study; it is used when indigenous people's attitudes towards foreigners or 'outsiders' change due to real or perceived threat, insecurities and fear of competition from migrants, leading to the onset of conflict (Campbell, 2003). Hardin (1995) provides a classical understanding of how conflict arises between two groups with different ethnic identifications. He postulates that each group's coordination (language, religion, mores and customs), while innocuous, serves as the basis on which conflict evolves, including political action against the other group. Sniderman et al. (2004) point to two theories in explaining the source of conflict: on one hand, realist conflict theorists' claim that group conflict originates in competition over economic resources, and on the other, social identity theorists' presumption that the driving motive is a need for positive differentiation.[8] While the praxis has often been that conflicts are a natural occurrence in any polity, they are rather aggravated by scarcity and competition for resources; this is the current situation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Whereas conflict has often not been a central focus of migration studies, there is convergence in the literature on migration and conflict, and the concepts are interrelated (see Hondagneu-Sote, 1994;

[8] See next chapter for a detailed description of the theories.

Perez, 2004; Smith, 2006; Nàjera, 2009). While migration and conflict can simultaneously cause and be the effect of each other, the focus has been rather lopsided, with conflict mostly recognised as a precursor to migration. The literature places conflict at the centre of the explanatory framework, "providing the strongest rationale for moving; determining how people move; and also shaping the consequences of movement, in particular, the way that they settle in a new place" (Bakewell and Bonfiglio, 2013: 5). Monsutti (2008) critiques this, opining that we cannot assume that a decline in conflict will cause a decline in movement, and placing importance on movement as a symptom of disruption. Similarly, it will be "equally wrong to neglect the on-going, perhaps mundane social processes that drive mobility, such as the search for an education, a spouse or a better life in the city" (Bakewell and Bonfiglio, 2013: 4).

But the impact of the overbearing shadow of conflict necessitating migration is undeniable. Migration can be a survival tactic in periods of violence and armed conflicts. Tigno (2006) explains that conflicts invariably lead to displacement and destruction of lives and property, disproportionately borne by innocent civilians or non-combatants, and migration offers the best possible chance to survive such calamitous situations. While there is no denying that conflict situations may lead to migration, the latter can also create the environment for the upsurge of the former.

Migration brings in its wake a host of complex challenges, including issues such as the brain-drain, the mistreatment and abuse of migrants, overpopulation, unemployment and threats to the status quo (Mutume, 2006). Among migration scholars, there is agreement that migration impacts on both sending and receiving areas. For instance, while citizens moving out may depopulate the sending area, the host community faces the consequences of overpopulation, overstretching of social facilities, increased social vices, the disintegration of cultural norms and values and increased political, ethnic and sub-ethnic tensions and conflicts (Akanji, 2012). Mabogunje (1970) reflects that while people are motivated to migrate by environmental and socioeconomic conditions, adjustments occur in both the sending and receiving regions. These adjustments may be positive or negative. In his study, Suhrke (1993) notes that population movement, whether of migrants or refugees, has significant impact on the receiving areas, but that the implications for social conflict differ between the two, and asserts that while refugees tend to be powerless, migrants, because of their capacity to generate and mobilise resources, are often feared as competitors and are more likely to invoke conflict. Considering that a large body of literature acknowledges migration as primarily undertaken by "young, versatile, and/or better educated members of the community" (Tumasi-Ankrah, 1995: 13), labelled by Bakewell (1996) as "economic migrants", they are likely to be received differently to those fleeing to avoid violence – perhaps even with hostility.

While literature abounds in the developed world on the dynamics, reactions and repercussions of the surge in immigration (see Kitschelt, 1997; Favell, 1998; Barry, 2001; Hitchcock, 2002; Sniderman et

al. 2004), there is less empirical documentation about host-migrant relationships in emergent economies, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (Adida, 2008). In his study of migration and conflict in Mindanao in the Philippines, Tigno (2006:27) found a significant trigger of conflict in voluntary, systematic and large-scale migration from other parts of the country; this resulted in the "marginalisation and minoritisation of the indigenous (i.e. both Moro and Lumad) peoples." This group was hitherto the majority, and the problem was compounded by the persistent neglect and exploitation of the new minority indigenous group. But Tigno (2006) is quick to observe that provinces in Mindanao experiencing violent conflict have exhibited significantly lower human development index (HDI) outcomes than provinces that did not experience conflict. Thus, poverty is another variable that should be considered as a significant correlate for violent conflict and migration, inasmuch as the overall factors leading to conflict in Mindanao are numerous and complexly interrelated. This is confirmed by Malapit et al. (2003), who reach a similar conclusion: that conflict is severe in areas affected by chronic poverty while well-to do-areas exhibit less conflict.

In her seminal study of the relationship between indigenous people and migrants in sub-Saharan Africa, Adida (2008) found that similarity negatively affected their relationship. She opines that groups that share cultural features reject each other because the group's inclination is to uphold their salient cultural identities. Conversely, if groups share few or no cultural features, the threat of group identity loss is low, thus host societies are less likely to reject migrants.

Adida's argument (2008) contrasts sharply with conventional wisdom, where the expectation is that distinctive cultural differences between host and migrant groups will lead to disintegration. While various studies have observed that the cause of the conflict was a perception of conflicting interests and goals, Esses et al. (1998) state that the underlying factor is ethnic difference. Similar evidence is revealed in a study by Caselli and Coleman II (2006), in which violent as well as non-violent conflicts have been premised on ethnic divisions. Similarly, Sniderman et al. (2004) write that the perceived distinctiveness of migrants in the Netherlands (skin colour, dress, language, educational and labour opportunities) increases the host society's reaction to the cultural identity of the increasing population of minorities. Hypothetically, Adida (2008: 3) summarises the above discussion: "the less alike A and B are, the less likely A and B will integrate, conversely, the more alike A and B are, the more likely A and B will integrate."

For want of a better term, the group of experts who profess an interconnection between the environment, migration and conflict can be called 'Development Environmentalists/Ecologists'. They believe that worsening climatic conditions in developing countries, where the environment is rapidly transforming, are likely to prompt migration and that this migration may incite conflict (Werz and Conley, 2012). Reuveny (2007, 2008) makes a similar claim. While emphasising the link between climate change and migration, however, he agrees with the mainstream literature in attributing

migration to network, supply-push and demand-pull forces (see Martin and Widgren, 2002). However, though Reuveny's study focuses on migration induced by climate change, he presents a conceptual model of the nexus between migration and conflict, intimating that: 1) the risk of conflict rises when the sudden influx of migrants increases competition between indigenes and migrants for scarce resources; 2) ethnic conflict is prompted by fears of separatism and repatriation of migrants to their home country, as migrants are perceived as a threat leading to conflict; 3) there is distrust between the sending and receiving areas; 4) long-standing fault lines may exacerbate conflict, for example competition between indigenous farmers and migrant nomads for right and access to lands; and 5) there are auxiliary conditions, for example, underdeveloped economies are prone to conflict since they are less able to absorb migrants than developed economies.

Many queries have been raised in response to Reuveny, especially the claim that when resources are scarce the potential for conflict increases. Alao (2007) disputes this, asserting that natural resource conflict within the West African region could not be attributed to scarcity as these countries have abundant resources. While acknowledging the reality of significant resource-related conflicts within the sub-region, with land as the main resource in contention, he asserts that these conflicts are not over scarcity but over:

> …disagreements over historical claims, changes in climatic conditions, consequences of changes in the nature of power balance, elite manipulation, youth reactions to vulnerability and exclusion and alterations in boundary structures. While in some cases each one of the listed items has been sole causes of conflicts, in most cases, many of these have come together to explain the cause of acrimonious inter-group relations (Alao, 2011: 63).

However, Ratner et al. (2013) uphold Reuveny's claim, maintaining that it is scarcity in relation to the dynamics between supply and demand that fuels conflict, and not its abundance.

Ross (2004) suggests that conflicts are inevitable when members of the host population feel aggrieved that the increase in the exploitation of natural resources caused by migration leads to reduction in job prospects, disruption of activities and pollution. While migration engenders conflict, this alone cannot be a sufficient condition. Nnoli (1978, cf. Akanji, 2012), affirming Alao's earlier claim (2011), states that intergroup conflict is not caused by contacts between groups, but rather the degree of competing claims among groups. He further argues that these could be in the form of claims to agricultural lands, political power distribution, economic resources, social amenities and the preservation of primordial ties. Thus, conflict erupts when one party's claim to land and landed resources results in the inability of other group(s) to access those resources to meet their own needs and interests.

Like most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana is endowed with myriad natural resources which act as a magnet for both internal and cross-border migration. The commonplace view is that the influx of migrants is likely to incite conflict as the new arrivals are blamed for a variety of complaints – real

or imagined – including downward pressure on wages, rising prices for staple products and increases in crime and other societal ills (Grant et al., 2011). However, despite the high value of natural resources, particularly gold and diamonds, and the associated inciting of violence and greed, systematic violence against migrants in and around mining areas is rare (Ibid); the perception is that migrant labourers contribute to the local economy rather than competing for scarce resources. The OECD (2012), assuming a middle stance, states that though Ghana has not experienced severe tensions related to migration, the country is not impervious to stigmatization of and discrimination against immigrants. Arguing against these claims, however, Mitchell (2012) found that conflicts occur between indigenes and migrants in Ghana especially over land, though they are not destructive. The complicated structure of land tenure leads to frequent infractions between migrants and indigenes, especially in the cocoa growing areas. While indigenes traditionally acquire land through inheritance and customary rights, migrants acquire theirs through purchase and negotiation with traditional and family leaders. Conflict arises when migrants believe that they have legitimately acquired the land through purchase, whereas among indigenous communities, mainly Akans, migrants do not have the capacity to own land; cash payments are merely symbolic of consent to use the land rather than outright sale (Mitchell, 2012). However, even in these situations, the indigenous people's anger is directed at the chiefs or the heads of the family, who are regarded merely as custodians of lands; they do not engage in violent scuffles with migrant farmers. In their study, Tsikata and Seini (2004) identify different types of conflict in Ghana, noting that the majority of these centre on land and citing instances of land-related conflict between migrant Fulani herdsmen and indigenous farmers in the Northern region of Ghana. However, they say that in most instances, conflicts are ethnic between locals and migrants. Often, land is the key issue (dubbed 'key resources' by Scoones (1996)) and is the source of disputes and conflicts between migrants and indigenes.

Suhrke (1993: 15), however, suggests that

> …cumulatively large population flows may be destabilizing by overwhelming the administrative apparatus of the state or the absorptive capacity of the receiving areas, in which case they become centres of endemic tension that periodically erupt in violence.

However, this is no reason to suggest that migration is less beneficial; the history of migration is also a history of new forms of coexistence, of integration and assimilation, and of non-violent relations. Migrants, including refugees, have historically brought valuable new labour and skills to the receiving area. This may suggest why in some localities migration does not result in episodes of violence (see Grant et al., 2011).

However, according to Appleton (2011), acceptance of migrants by the host community could be enhanced when integration, defined as "the process of inclusion of immigrants in the institutions and relationships of the host society" (Boswick and Heckman, 2006: 1), is seen as a form of partnership, where the host and migrant cultures (or individuals) come to a sort of middle point where

they take time to understand each other's journey. It is obvious that to achieve integration, the assertion that a migrant's gain is an indigene's loss needs to be broken (IDASA, 2008). The distinctiveness of migrants presents an apparent difficulty in achieving integration, with the added challenge that more often than not they prefer to live in enclaves, further widening the gap between migrants and host (Ibid). Similarly, in most instances, host communities resist integration from fear of losing their socio-cultural identity, rights and jobs. This has been exacerbated by a sensationalist media who say that giving full rights encourages the influx of potential migrants (Hugo, 2005).

2.3.1 The Role of Youth in the Migration-Conflict Nexus

Among the disaggregated factors noted above in the study by Alao (2011), which acknowledges that all factors causing conflicts are relevant, of particular importance to this study are the issues of youth reaction to vulnerability and exclusion and their potential to generate or exacerbate conflict. The sub-continent, as Alao notes (2011: 65), is inundated with youth, who are frustrated "at the downward plunge of their economic fortune and disappointed in the … management of natural resources," and are "now increasingly assuming violent dispositions." In recent times, studies on conflict in sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries have described the increasing and critical role that youth play, especially since they are at the forefront of the socioeconomic and political agenda of their societies. Youth is recognised as a cohort who resort to violence when the state is unable to meet their needs and aspirations (Ikelegbe and Garuba, 2011).

Atta-Asamoah and Aning (2011) argue that the combined effects of a large youth population and a downward spiral of economic fortunes have contributed to the surge in conflict in the West African sub-region. They support this by analysing conflict *vis-à-vis* a country's position within the five demographic transition phases, postulating that:

> Countries in the late phase of the demographic transition, characterised by lower birth rates and higher life expectancy had an even distributed age group ratios and were less prone to the outbreak of civil conflicts, conversely countries in medium demographic transitions characterised by higher birth rates and lower life expectancies resulted in high youth population as a proportion of total adult population and became more predisposed to the outbreak and sustenance of conflicts (Atta-Asamoah and Aning, 2011: 101).

They justify this claim with evidence from countries such as Sierra Leone and Liberia, concluding that countries whose 'young adult' population was over 40 percent were prone to conflict. Beehner (2007), citing a Population Action International (PAI) report, also observed that more than two-thirds of conflicts across the world took place in countries where the majority of the population were under thirty years of age, adding that 60 out of the 67 countries with 'youth bulge' experienced some "form of social unrest and violence". While this cannot be easily discounted, countries such as Togo, Cameroon and Ghana, which exhibit similar characteristics, have not been at war.

An overly large youth population will not in itself suggest the prevalence of conflict, though their presence escalates and prolongs it (see Moller, 1968; Mesquida and Wiener, 1996); there are other factors, including local dynamics and prevailing conditions. Attributing conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries solely to the youth bulge phenomenon could be misleading (Atta-Asamoah and Aning, 2011); critics retort that there are many other factors. However, they have not denied that a large youth cohort predisposes to social conflict (Beehner, 2007). The role of youth in conflict situations cannot, therefore, be discounted. For instance, the World Development Report 2007 reinforces the concept of youth as simultaneously a "creative and destructive force" (De Boeck and Honwana, 2005), stating the apparent opportunities and risks for developing countries with a youthful population. The report further states that if young people fail to assert themselves and seize opportunities, their marginalised and vulnerable position will be entrenched, resulting in disillusionment and exacerbation of antisocial behaviour and conflict.

Significantly, the narrowing of the discussion on youth in the migration-conflict nexus stems from they being a major component in migrant population streams in terms of magnitude and impact. The IRIN (2007: 18) states that "youth are on the move", with 15–29 year olds making up half the total of those relocating to other areas in search of better opportunities. Considering the paucity of data on migration flow in sub-Saharan Africa, the figure could even be higher than estimated, but it is generally agreed among scholars and policymakers that in Africa, young people dominate migratory streams, both internally and internationally (UNCEA, 2010). In the same vein, as seen above, surveys undertaken by Adams (2007), Ping and Pieke (2003), Anh et al. (2003), and Afolayan et al. (2009) assert that in the developing world, movements within countries far surpass those across national borders. They presuppose that receiving regions and counties will be inundated with significantly higher youth numbers, with the propensity for their numbers to outpace available jobs, and that this will increase the likelihood of tension and conflict. Juxtaposing the two scenarios above –youth as the single largest category of migrants, and with a significant, and sometimes the leading, role in conflict – a case can be advanced that a large influx of young people into an area can generate conflict and social tension.

In conclusion, conflict precipitated by youth may reinforce the notion that they are deviant and non-conformist, entrenching negative stereotypes and portraying them as in need of protection from society and from themselves. Nevertheless, it demonstrates that along with other contributory factors such as persistent unemployment and the inability of the state to adequately cater for their needs, youth will resort to violence as a coping mechanism (Ikelegbe and Garuba, 2011).

2.4 Mining and Conflicts

The development of the extraction industry has significantly changed the fortunes of many mineral resource-rich countries, bringing socioeconomic benefits including jobs and infrastructure

developments (Davis and Franks, 2011). Similarly, innovation in technology may not have developed without the discovery and extraction of mineral deposits like coltan and gold.

However, literature and various advocacy reports regard mining as perhaps the dirtiest economic activity, with consequences for the environment and for social and economic life (Jenkins and Yakovleva, 2006). According to Barton (2005), these negative consequences are unfortunately borne by local communities who live close to mining developments. The concern of the international community, especially environmental NGOs and advocacy groups, is that presently, the largest proportion of the world's mineral deposits can be found in the developing world. This is often characterised by ineffective and corrupt governments and institutions, widening income disparity, fiscal and monetary imbalances and the absence of rule of law (UNCEA, 2003).

While countries in sub-Saharan Africa have witnessed unprecedented growth in mining development, so has conflict increased with the presence of different interest groups with diverse visions, needs and objectives.[9] These conflicts, according to Barton (2005: 10), have arisen mainly as a reaction to: "1) loss of land and livelihood, 2) environmental degradation, and 3) human rights violation". Other studies indicate that traditional rural economies slump as a result of developments in the extractive sector, culminating in "ecological distribution conflicts" (Martinez-Alier, 2002: 8). However, in most cases, natural resource conflicts disrupt societies, undermine livelihoods and escalate and perpetuate violence, with the potential to unravel the entire fabric of the society if not addressed (Castro and Nielsen, 2001; Hilson, 2002).

Mining-related conflicts are defined as "interactions that range from minor disagreements, to escalated or violent conflict" (Kemp et al., 2011: 93) that significantly impinge on mining operations and threaten the livelihood of stakeholders. For methodological purposes, Kroger (2013: 29) provides a useful categorization, distinguishing three levels of mining-related conflicts by their intensity: "low-level conflicts (some local organizing); medium (street protests or other visible mobilization); high (deaths, violence, or arrests)". Despite the different contexts, realities and characteristics that mining-related conflicts exhibit, in general terms they can be classified in the table below.

[9] Several Authors (2010) Prevention of Conflicts Linked to Mining Activity, Ana Maria Aranibar ed., GECOMIN Network/CYTED, La Paz

Table 2.3: Classification of Mining Conflicts

Sociocultural	Includes identity loss, marginalisation, change of cultural configurations, and disregard of social organizations, conflictual norms and values among key stakeholders.
Environmental	Involves matters that border on contamination, water usage, landscape modification, environmental cost, change in the course of rivers and risks of floods and landslides.
Economical	Includes distribution of benefits and royalties, the amount and allocation, co-participation, land tenure, rights of use and permit.
Labour	Issues such as local content, remuneration, fulfilment of labour and social norms, conditions of work and security.
Governance	Issues such as transparency, corruption, authority and control, incomplete legislation, absence of institutionality and political exclusion.
Territorial	Issues such as the demarcation of concessions, jurisdictions, access of land use, common property rights.

Source: adapted from Sarudiansky and Nielson (2012) and Several Authors (2010) Prevention

Though conflict is innate to every society, its incidence in poor countries is high. Stewart (2008) observes that seven out of ten of the poorest countries have experienced or are undergoing some sort of violent conflict, and that the number is even higher among resource-endowed poor countries. This is reflected in the recent increase in attention to mining-related/resource conflicts in mining research and advocacy, and the trend is likely to continue as the benefits accrue to just a few while the burden is shared by the society. In their seminal study, Kemp et al. (2011: 93) hold that the recent spate of resource conflicts is motivated by increasing awareness in the community of:

> …concerns that relate to economic or livelihood security; land or water access, ownership, use or degradation; environmental effects; gendered impacts; impacts on social cohesion and cultural beliefs; treatment and claims of human rights violations and other injustices; disparities between the distribution of benefits and risks; and the very meaning of development.

This has reinforced the argument that the exploitation of natural resources, rather than propagating economic development and improving well-being, is the bane of local people, societies and countries (Brunnschweiler, 2008), especially where they have been outperformed by resource-poor countries (see Sachs and Warner, 1995; Auty, 2001; Collier and Hoeffler, 2005; and Ross, 1999, 2001). This is affirmed by Sachs and Warner (1995), who say that countries endowed with natural resources have

experienced sluggish growth and have lagged countries with scarce natural resources. This is dubbed the 'curse of natural resources' (Adu, 2010). Ross (2004) suggests that countries that depend heavily on the export of natural resources tend to suffer from a variety of difficulties, including economic decline, exacerbation of poverty, high corruption levels and dictatorial regimes. Drawing on several studies, Ross argues that these countries' difficulties have led to conflict. Similarly, while Le Billon (2001: 563) argues that considerable abundance of natural resources aggravates the "vulnerability to and the risk of conflict", he is quick to reiterate that conflict cannot be predicted by the mere availability of the resource, but that "rather the desires sparked by this availability as well as people's needs (or greed) … can prove conflictual, with violence becoming the decisive means of arbitration". The appropriation and control of the resource or resource area have been frequently cited as being at the heart of these conflicts (Welsch, 2008). Also, resource-endowed southern parts of Ghana have witnessed periodic social conflict over attempts by individuals or groups to dominate these resources (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011). Similarly, the risk of conflict is also aggravated when the control of the resource has two incompatible uses, especially in instances where the development of a mine restricts access of the local or indigenous people to an ancestral burial site.

Switzer (2001) found that abundance, rather than scarcity, resulted in conflicts, as witnessed in countries such as Nigeria, Congo and Sierra Leone. With the majority of mineral-rich developing countries dependent on primary commodity export, the World Bank (2001) states that these countries are significantly prone to conflict. The expectation would be that agrarian-based countries should also exhibit an increased risk of conflict, however Collier and Hoeffler (2002) found no relationship between agricultural dependence and conflict, even though conflicts were pervasive in poor countries which were agrarian-based. This stems from that fact that whereas incomes (termed 'rents') generated from natural resource exploitation far exceed overheads and the cost of labour, incomes from agricultural products face sharp decline in the long term (Collier, 2009). Bringing some nuance to the debate from the perspective of political ecology, Le Billon (2001) asserts that a society risks conflict when confronted with either abundance (mostly of non-renewable resources) or scarcity (mostly of renewable resources). De Soysa (2000) corroborates, suggesting that countries with considerable reserves of non-renewable resources are susceptible to conflict.

Two overarching approaches emerge from the literature over the natural resource conflict debate: the 'grievance' hypothesis advanced by Stewart (2008) and the 'greed' thesis by Collier (2000b). While the grievance theorists argue that conflict emerges due to "horizontal inequalities — inequalities in economic, social or political dimensions or cultural status between culturally defined groups", Collier's stance is that "overwhelming evidence points to the importance of economic agendas as opposed to grievance" (Keen, 2012: 1). Though the two approaches may contrast sharply, Stewart holds that grievance and greed often interact in complex ways. A third approach, which is a necessary condition, adopts a "state-centric approach, concentrating on political factors and institutional

weakness" (Charles-Philippe and Gangé, 2007: 6). However, whichever approach one adopts, the development of a more comprehensive framework of contemporary conflicts will involve a "shifting interplay between economic and other factors over time" (Ballentine and Sherman, 2003).

Buckles and Rusnak (1999) identify several factors that predispose natural resources to conflict, including an environment where the consequences of exploitation can be felt a distance away; for instance, pollution of a river body affects communities downstream. Also, natural resources are located in settings involving a variety of actors; however, decisions are made by those who wield power and influence. Furthermore, natural resources represent identity, culture and modes of social organisation and are not just a resource that people compete over. Finally, over time the supply of natural resources dwindles as a result of increased demand, degradation of the environment and unequal distribution.

Summarizing the viewpoints of several authors, Adekeye (2010) and Akabzaa (2007) point to the following as an indication of the strong links between mining and conflict:

- Conflict arises over misunderstanding over who has the rights to the resource or to its location. For example, confusion about surface rights and mineral rights.
- The potential for conflict is enhanced when there is no consensus on which group should be included in resource management and on distribution of benefits.
- Disruption of livelihoods and degradation of the environment caused by mining engenders conflict.
- Mining expropriates land, denying other groups the right of usage and leading to conflict.
- Profits accrued from exploitation of natural resources can be used by one group to suppress the endeavours of other groups.
- Mining can cause conflict due to the struggle for self-determination and socio-cultural survival.
- Conflicts over mining arise due to the struggle against pollution and land degradation.

While the consensus is that conflicts are prevalent in mineral-rich countries (Lujala, 2010), these conflicts are not homogenous: they depend on the "type of commodity being extracted, the extraction process involved and the geographical location of deposits" (Okoh, 2013: 3). To a large extent, natural resource conflict in sub-Saharan Africa has involved solid minerals and ores, including diamonds, gold and coltan, and is attributable to grievances associated with unequal distribution of resource rents, land expropriation and environmental pollution (Okoh, 2013).

While every conflict is unique, and despite the fact that research alludes to several causal factors on the relationship between conflicts and natural resources (Maphosa, 2012), studies have increasingly demonstrated that land use and access have been tied to the natural resource and conflict debate.

According to Ofei-Aboagye et al. (2004), very few mineral-rich countries have been able to avoid land use conflicts. These are recognised in the literature as a critical and contentious issue facing countries endowed with rich mineral resources, due to contrasting perceptions of land resources (Amankwah and Anim-Sackey, 2004; Hilson, 2002; MMSD, 2002; ILO, 1999). Who takes what, and who claims rights to what, have been critical underlying factors in tensions and conflicts, especially between surface rights and mineral rights owners (Ofei-Aboagye et al., 2004). For instance, because mining projects and concessions are located in or near rural areas, communities denied access and the right to use land frequently agitate against companies, with detrimental consequences for security and development. Complaints, petitions and demonstrations have been the myriad ways in which communities have shown their dissent over the loss of farmlands and livelihoods, polluted drinking water and damage to the environment (MAC, 2006). Hilson (2002) observes that the heavy demands made by mining created more land use disputes than any other business activity, often resulting in the loss of land and livelihoods, hindering the growth of traditional businesses and causing the disruption of communities. Andrew (2003) argues that conflict over land use rights occur frequently among artisanal miners and other stakeholders, adversely affecting livelihoods, environment and the wider society.

In recent times, institutions and researchers have increasingly looked at the possible links between land access, natural resources and conflict. The FAO and the UN have commissioned a number of studies to develop conceptual toolkits and guidance to deal with these issues. Significant in these studies has been the broader concentration on structural issues such as the role of land administration and reform (see Kitay, 1998); however, this study situates the role of the stakeholders (their actions and inactions) as a prerequisite for conflicts. Mining-related conflicts and struggles ostensibly occur among stakeholders in the industry; these include community members agitating against mining companies and government, and ASM operators engaging antagonistically with large-scale mining companies. They relate to issues bordering on economic, social, cultural and religious concerns (UNECA, 2003). In recent years, widespread interest and criticism of the negative impacts of mining have led to the involvement of local and international NGOs, advocacy and environmental groups (World Bank, 2002).

A search of mining-related conflicts shows the often rampant clash of interest among almost all stakeholders, for instance between communities and large-scale mining companies; governments and ASM; and ASM and large-scale mines (see Kemp et al. 2010; Calvano, 2008; Hilson, 2002; Galvin et al., 2009; Wilson, 2012; Taabazuing et al., 2012). However, the multifaceted relationship between ASM and communities has rarely made the headlines in academic literature. It is this gap that this study hopes to fill, as it is imperative to examine the critical role played by ASM in mining-related conflicts within the local community. A report by Agenda 2000 indicates that for ASM to contribute to sustainable development, conflicts among the various stakeholders should be minimised and should

not lead to degradation of traditional values. But this has rarely been the case. There have been disputes, clashes and strained relationships in several countries where ASM is prevalent. Most extractive developments have the capacity to generate social conflict; however, the preponderance of conflict in the mining industry is typically due to the presence of artisanal miners. Unlike oil and gas, which involve a large capital base, mining gold or diamonds can be undertaken with little capital, thus the probability of generating conflicts is high, while its solution can be complex (Sweeting and Clark, 2004).

Hentschel et al. (2003), in their seminal study, state that conflict is caused by the absence of clear legal frameworks about surface and mineral rights, and by the lack of enforceability, which impacts on access and rights of land-use. Unlike other business activities relating to natural resources, ASM has been frequently cited for its potential to actuate land-use conflict because of different competing interests and, more importantly, the lack of "clear legitimate rights of access" (Andrew, 2003: 119).

In Ghana, gold mining and its unbridled pursuance has contributed to social conflicts and skirmishes that plague the country's poor people. The situation is aggravated by the presence of artisanal miners, whose activities have environmental, social and health implications, and this descends into conflicts between artisanal miners and other stakeholders (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011). While the activities of both small-scale and large-scale mining engender conflict, the migratory and often transient nature of ASM results in migrant groups taking control of community lands. Such invasions have the potential to lead to conflict, "bordering on cultural warfare" (Weber-Fahr et al., 2001: 13). Adekeye (2010) writes that developing countries have been susceptible to conflict triggered by the migration of artisanal miners – "causing distress-push and demand-pull pressures" (Ingram et al., 2011: 305) – usually upon discovery of a natural resource or a larger quantity of the resource than anticipated. The sudden influx of miners has been cited in the creation or exacerbation of social conflict: not only does it place a heavy burden on social infrastructure, but it also leads to increases in the cost of food and basic services as well as changes in power and cultural dynamics. Similarly, indigenous communities have often perceived artisanal miners as carriers of previously unknown diseases (Sweeting and Clark, 2000). These newcomers are viewed suspiciously, as a group without strong ties to the community.[10] Sweeting and Clark (2000: 45-46) cite a bill to allow access to the Yanomami Indian lands along the Venezuelan border in Brazil, for exploration of mineral resources by foreign mining companies; this simultaneously led to an influx of artisanal miners encroaching on the demarcated area, resulting in violence and conflict with the local communities.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the activities of ASM are a significant trigger for conflict; however, there is a body of literature that concludes that not all conflicts are destructive and that shows the possibility of positive effects on the wider society (Bebbington and Bury, 2009). Bebbington et al.

[10] (www.miningfacts.org., accessed 21/09/2013).

(2008: 8) aver that mining-related conflict may only represent "socio-environmental struggles over the control of space, the governance of territory, access to land and water resources, the defence of human and citizenship rights, and dissatisfaction over the distribution of mineral rents"; this does not necessarily result in destructive struggles. Rather, it could result in constructive engagements between stakeholders on the best practices to identify and resolve underlying conflictual issues (Lewis, 1996). But while the conflicts experienced in mining areas in Ghana have not been egregious, Wilson (2012) writes that we ignore small conflicts at our peril, since violent large-scale conflicts arise from smaller ones over a variety of issues. Consequently, a number of questions need to be answered to find the origins of these emergent conflicts before they evolve into large-scale armed conflicts.

2.5 Conclusion

This review has sought to highlight the movement of young Africans into ASM against the backdrop of socioeconomic and political challenges, and how this movement could instigate conflict with host communities. The review has examined the difficulties faced by young people attempting to transition into adulthood while rejecting traditional livelihood pathways and migrating to areas offering better opportunities. The focus has been particularly on those in mineral-rich resource countries moving to mining communities. Though migration may offer an opportunity for improved standards of living, it is fraught with challenges, including conflicts between host communities and migrants. The review has examined the connection between migration and conflicts, the role that youth play in deepening those conflicts, and the state's reduced capacity to curtail conflicts related to migration and natural resource exploitation. The final section of the review examined the association between mining and conflicts, highlighting the role of ASM in generating and entrenching conflict with host mining communities. This provides crucial background information and a context in which to examine youth migration, ASM and conflict.

In addition, the chapter provides a complementary underpinning of the theoretical framework for this study. This will be discussed in the next chapter, which will provide a theoretical understanding of conflict and intergroup conflicts *vis-à-vis* the relationships between host and migrants. As well as examining the basis of conflicts, the next chapter will seek insights into how they are managed, deepening our understanding that conflict theories are not necessarily cataclysmic but that they involve processes which can lead to resolution.

Chapter Three

Theory of Conflict and Intergroup Relations

> *One gets the impression that conflict is an African invention. From the Horn to the Cape of Good Hope, from the Canary Islands to the Seychelles, Africa reads like the proverbial theatre of conflict (Totobi Quakyi, 1995).*

3.0 Theoretical Background

This chapter discusses the mainstream theoretical perspectives on intergroup conflict and cooperation that will be employed to predict the attitudes and behaviour of migrants and host communities in this study. The chapter has three parts. First, as a foundation for intergroup relations, I trace the evolution of conflict as a social phenomenon, focusing on the works of earlier and contemporary theorists and on the definitions and key variables. The second part is a review of three theories that have informed debate on intergroup relations. The last section positions these theories in the context of the study.

3.1 Understanding Conflict

A major focal point in the social sciences is the understanding of what constitutes a society, its affinities and ties and the solidarity and socialisation of its members (Wieviorka, 2013). An extreme solution to this is the positing of social life as a quest for harmony. This leads Parsons to view conflict as a disease, with disruptive, disassociating and dysfunctional consequences (Coser, 1956). However, following Marx's view of class struggle as the fundamental building block of societies, proponents perceive struggle as a central point of social life. This view considers conflict a factor of:

> …progress and dynamic action, at least a normal form of social life, a type of interaction ensuring change or… the working of society (Wieviorka, 2013: 698).

To Marxists, conflict is inevitable in the course of human interaction and is essential to change, adaptation and development (Shantz, 1987). However, paradoxically, conflict does not necessarily rip society apart, but rather is acknowledged as important in binding it together. While definitions differ, there is consensus that conflict can be:

> …managed constructively or destructively: it is possible to resolve conflicts peacefully, through negotiation and cooperation, as well as violently through force or threat (USAID, 2012: 9).

Unfortunately, the theoretical assumptions have often proven challenging in practice due to the many different parties and interests involved.

The concept of conflict is multidimensional and assumes diverse forms. Rummel (1976) asserts that a consideration of one form depends on our analytical purpose and on the practical problem at hand. It is possible to encounter intra-individual conflict (Rahim, 2011) or personal-role conflict (Wall and Callister, 1995), where the individual is in conflict with himself or herself. However, to lay the

context for the theoretical framework for this study, this section examines social conflict involving parties made up of individuals, groups and communities. This includes a critical overview of renowned conflict theorists to provide a perspective on the choice of intergroup theories as the main framework.

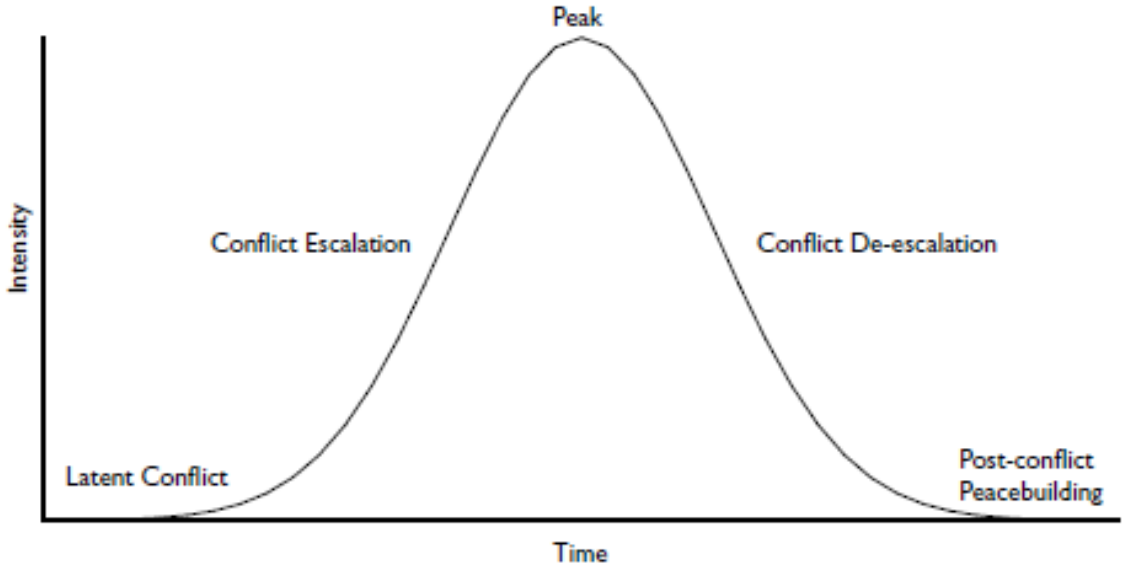
The review shows the large volume of critical literature on the nature and theory of conflict and the divergent ideas among theorists. Indeed, conflict has, and continues to be, a major concern in most social science disciplines. Conflict theory generally seeks to explain the origins, variations and effects of conflict (Allan, 2006). It has benefitted from contributions from theorists and classical philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, Hobbes and Locke, Hegel and Marx, Dewey, Georg Simmel, Talcott Parsons and Lewis Coser. In the forefront of conflict studies has been the vast literature of Marxism, which assumes class conflict as the starting-point of analysis. However, conflict scholarship has evolved as conscious efforts have been made to understand and deal with it constructively. The late nineteenth century saw the inclusion of ethnicity as a basis for understanding conflicts (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). Increasingly over the years, other scholars, including Duke (1976) and Olsen and Marger (1993), have addressed conflicts with reference to power, or the exercise of power, and status (Beckley and Korber, 1994; Allan, 2006).

The idea that all humans engage in conflict may seem obvious, but recognising conflict may not be that simple. Some conflicts may be 'latent' (see Figure 3.1 below) with no overt fighting, while fighting such as wrestling and boxing may not be conflict (Bartos and Wehr, 2002). While this may presuppose that competition may not necessarily be conflict, Deutsch (1973 c.f. Oberschall, 1978: 291) argues that the presence of competition in itself implies:

> …an opposition in the goals of… interdependent parties such that the probability of goal attainment for one decreases as the probability for the other increases.

Therefore, conflict occurs when the parties in competition become "aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the other" (Boulding, 1963: 5). This implies that situations of incompatibility lead to competition. However, conflict only "occurs when the parties become aware of the incompatibility and wish to interfere with the attainment of each other's goal attainments" (Rahim, 2011: 17).

Figure 3.1: Conflict Curve



Source: Lund (1996) and USAID (2012). This conflict curve represents an idealised model to help explain that conflict occurs along a continuum starting from Latent Conflict (i.e. conflict brewing under the surface and yet to manifest, through a period of conflict escalation, to a peak period of active fighting and a period of de-escalation (return to negotiation or retrenchment). These peaks and lows are dubbed, "the conflict cycle".

In an attempt to conceptualise conflict, a distinction is made between social conflict and violence. Rummel (1976) argues that violence, insofar as it is not directed towards coercing another, does not constitute social conflict. For instance, using physical force to drag an accused person to jail is not conflict. However, Rummel (1976) asserts that violence is ambiguous and that we can categorise it as conflict only if we determine the associated field of expression, by assessing intention.

While the above conceptual notions of conflict exist in everyday encounters, definitions may vary in principle depending on the linguistic context and the meanings attached to it. In its broadest sense, Berlew (1977) defines conflict as the existence of disagreement among people. This definition is simplistic and unspecific, since everybody is in conflict with everybody. Nicholson (1992) defines conflict as "wants, needs or obligations of the parties involved, such that conflict exists when the parties wish to carry out acts which are mutually inconsistent". Coser (1967) defines it as:

> …a struggle over values and claims to status, power, and scarce resources, in which the aims of the conflict groups are not only to gain the desired values, but also to neutralise, injure, or eliminate rivals.

This definition accommodates a broad spectrum of social phenomena encompassing violent and non-violent conflicts, including racial clashes; class struggles; religious persecutions; communal conflicts, riots; and protest gatherings (Oberschall, 1978). However, it fails to account for the incompatibility of

affections and emotions related to personality clashes or for criticisms that incite negative feelings, hostilities and conflicts (Rahim, 2011). Thomas (1976: 891) offers a more comprehensive definition:

> …a process which includes the perceptions, emotions, behaviours, and outcomes of two parties …. Conflict is the process which begins when one party perceives that the other has frustrated, or is about to frustrate, some concern of his.

Glasl (2002, 2004, translated by Schwieren) expands his definition in an attempt to synthesise the definitions of earlier theorists:

> …an interaction between actors (individuals, groups, organisations…), where at least one actor perceives a difference or experiences incompatibilities in perceptions, cognitions, emotions, or will with the other actor in such a way that his ideas or wishes are being hindered by the actor.

According to Lucade (2012: 10), conflict is "a clash of antithetical ideas or interests [with the parties] pursuing mutually incompatible goals". Despite the variances in conflict definitions, Baron (1990: 199) found common elements that overlap these definitions:

1. Conflict includes opposing interests between individuals or groups in a zero-sum situation
2. Such opposed interests must be recognised for conflict to exist
3. Conflict involves the belief, on each side, that the other will thwart (or has already thwarted) its interests
4. Conflict is a process; it develops out of existing relationship between individuals or groups and reflects their past interactions and the contexts in which these took place
5. Conflict implies actions by one or both sides that do, in fact, produce thwarting of the other's goals.

For this study, I adopt Bartos and Wehr's definition of conflict as a "situation in which actors use conflict behaviour against each other to attain incompatible goals and/or to express their hostility". While this may not be as expressive as the definition by Glasl (2004), it embodies relevant concepts that fit this study.

While concurring with early theorists like Marx and Weber, contemporary conflict theorists such as Coser (following Simmel) suggest that no group or society can be entirely free of conflict. Coser argues further that conflicts within groups and societies are not entirely disruptive and dysfunctional, and that "groups require disharmony as well as harmony, dislocation as well as association" (1956: 31). He distinguishes between "realistic" and "unrealistic" conflict. Conflict is "realistic" when it pertains to one's frustration at unmet needs, arising as a means rather than an end, while "unrealistic" conflicts are generally outcomes of one's need to release tension. Coser argues further that conflict fluctuates in levels of violence. It will be less violent when perceived as a means to achieve carefully

thought-out goals. However, when people are emotionally engaged and the goals of the group are seen as transcendent, conflict tends to be violent. More importantly, Coser observed two types of *functional consequences of conflict*: internal conflict, and external conflict, which transpires outside the group (Allan, 2006). A nation may engage in external conflict, while internal conflicts are tensions among different parties within a social system, though they frequently occur at a low level. Here, internal conflict forces society to introduce solutions; Allan (2006) gives the example of conflict between labour and management that led to the formation of labour laws in Western capitalist countries.

Unlike Coser, Randall Collins (1975), who is considered one of the most influential conflict theorists (Anderson, 2007), draws on Weber and Durkheim, bringing broader, robust and vital contributions to the comprehension of conflict. In a review of Collins' seminal work, "conflict sociology" (1975), Collins (1993) and Allan (2006) identify four substantive points of conflict theory. Firstly, Collins (1993: 290) claims that social resources can generate "potential conflict" between the haves and have-nots. Whereas Dahrendorf asserts that power is the only resource in society, Collins outlines three categories of resources: economic – generally classified as material conditions; power – the positions within control networks; and status or cultural – best understood as "control over social rituals producing group solidarity and group symbolism" (Ibid: 290). Secondly, potential conflicting interests lead to conflict to the extent that opposing factions become mobilised. Thirdly, conflict generates sequels of conflicts; and finally, conflict diminishes as resources for mobilisation are used up. Collins argues that conflict turns the wheel of history, in that one conflict ends in the lining-up of new resources which serve as the basis for the formation of new interests and conflicts. However, de-escalation occurs when the material cost of conflicts is too high, or when groups become disassembled and their members dispersed.

The definition of conflict adopted here incorporates four concepts: actors, goal incompatibility, hostility and conflict behaviour (action), which I will elaborate upon below, though Wallensteen (2012) asserts that conflict consists of three components (incompatibility, action and actors).

3.1.1 Actors

In a strict sense, actors are key to the occurrence of conflict (Wallensteen, 2012). Bartos and Wehr (2002) write that actors are not only individuals but also groups, which Schmidt and Kochan (1972) identify as 'decision-making units' (individual or collective). Wallensteen (2012: 16) suggests that "the history of the actors, the actors' understanding of their own role and their resources are important elements in conflict analysis". Lucade (2012) differentiates between symmetric and asymmetric conflict, situating them in the contexts of actors. He asserts that symmetric conflicts occur where the conflicting groups are generally equal with regard to the prevailing context and resources. Since the actors' strengths are equal, they agree on mutually laid down socio-political systems on how to handle

and manage conflict. Asymmetric conflicts, on the other hand, reflect unbalanced relationships characterised by "unequal social status, unequal wealth and access to resources, and unequal power", resulting in discrimination and oppression (Lucade, 2012: 12).

3.1.2 Incompatible Goals

The necessary precondition for conflict is the perception of goal incompatibility, in that one group attaining a goal is seen as preventing others from achieving theirs under the same circumstances or with equivalent outcomes (Schmidt and Kochan, 1972). Galtung (2000) avers that when goals are incompatible, for example, when two groups want the same land, or two nations want the same state, a conflict situation arises. Similarly, in situations where groups' successes or goal attainment depend on a common resource, conflict is rife. However, according to Simon (1953), when the resource in question is relatively unlimited, it will be irrational for one group to lay claim to it, and hence a perception of incompatibility is averted.

To determine whether goals are incompatible, Bartos and Wehr (2002) consider two options. Firstly, where the attainment of goals by both parties simultaneously is logically impossible; and secondly, and more complex, where the two parties have incompatible 'payoffs'. In using a payoff matrix, the authors permit incompatibility such that two goals are incompatible if there is a positive payoff for one party and a negative one for the other. Further, it allows us to consider the extent to which goals and interests are incompatible, as well as to determine whether an agreement is possible. For instance, Bar-Tal (2000) acknowledges that conflict resolution is only possible when opposing parties identify and eliminate the situation that created the incompatibility, and when they institute measures mutually agreed and favourable to both parties. Schmidt and Kochan (1972) attest that incompatible goals engender conflict; however, they are deficiently silent on how to resolve it. For them, a set of variables is required to increase the probability of the parties engaging in conflict. They call this the perceived opportunity for interference, which is dependent on the resources and activities that the parties share.

3.1.3 Hostility

By our adopted definition, conflict behaviour is due not only to incompatible goals, but also to groups expressing hostility towards each other. Bartos and Wehr (2002) define this as opposition or resistance in thought or principle, and distinguish rational and irrational behaviours, each with differing effects on conflict behaviour. By its simplest definition, rational behaviour is a decision-making process based on choices resulting in the optimal level of benefit or utility for the individual. Rational deliberation involves considering a number of possible actions, the likely consequences of each action, the careful evaluation of each set of consequences, and choosing the action with the most desirable consequences (Ibid: 20). In most instances, the hostility expressed is less antagonising and violent. Irrational behaviour, on the other hand, is mostly driven by emotions, against our better

judgement and often fuelled by anger. It is spontaneous and therefore tends to be more violent. It is possible, however, for conflict to start rationally but deteriorate into irrationality. Additionally, an action which an individual or group considers rational may be significantly different from what another party may choose in a similar situation (Ibid: 21).

3.1.4 Conflict Behaviour (Action)

Walker (1970: 18, c.f. Schmidt and Kochan, 1972) defines conflict behaviour as "actions by one member which are inconsistent with the goals or objective of some other member". Consider a situation in which two people hold different goals and their behaviour is motivated by their goals. The behaviour of one will be contrary to the goal of the other. Any behaviour that leads to the attainment of a party's goal, but is associated with hostility towards the opponent, is regarded as conflict behaviour. Bartos and Wehr (2002) distinguish between rational and irrational conflict behaviour as well as between coercive (such as physically harming the opponent) and non-coercive behaviour (such as searching for a mutually acceptable solution).

This section has attempted to understand the concept of conflict. It has focused on a critical review of the works of renowned conflict theorists, the definitions of conflict and its key variables. The next section undertakes an in-depth review of selected theories of intergroup conflicts as a guide to relations between host and migrants.

3.2 Intergroup Theories

In one of the foremost papers on intergroup studies, William Sumner describes the human tendency to form groups, and opines that the survival of one depends on loyalty to, and sacrifice for, one's group (us, or in-group) and hatred and contempt for others, or the 'out-group'. Sumner calls this ethnocentrism, with one's own group as 'the centre of everything,' with 'all others… scaled and rated with reference to it" (1906: 13). Groups do not live in isolation from each other. Park (1928) observes that society is a conglomeration of human relations, leading Sherif (1966) to advance that whenever groups interact with one another based on a set of indicators pertaining to their group, their actions can be classified as 'group behaviour'. However, as Tajfel (1982) notes, there will be no intergroup behaviour unless there is an 'outside' acknowledgement that the group exists.

The fundamental economic problem of human existence, which has implications for group interaction, is that resources are scarce; however, individuals and, for that matter, groups, have unlimited wants and needs, and these form the basis of competition. Tajfel (1982) writes that scarce resources have no value outside the context of competition. Examples of intergroup conflicts include: perceived threats to the contributions of subunits to the success of the organisation; constraints arising from the activities of other units (van Knippenberg, 2003); tensions and wars between countries; competition between native populations and ethnic minorities or immigrant groups for resources

perceived as limited, such as jobs, lands, etc.; and perceived erosion of identity, lifestyles, values and norms (Wagner and Hewstone, 2012). This has prompted studies on intergroup behaviour in the context of conflict, competition, cooperation, personal interaction within and between groups, in-group and out-group structure etc. (Tajfel et al., 1971). Intergroup conflict theories are broadly categorised as micro ("focusing on the often unconscious and irrational motivation of individuals") or macro (emphasising "the factors manifested in the conscious, rational interaction between groups") (Cargile et al., 2006: 48).

It is tempting to try to outline all the many potentially useful theories; however, this thesis centres on three. I outline their main theoretical underpinnings and highlight some challenges that emerge. The discussion begins with Realistic Group Conflict Theory since, as Liu (2012: 3) explains, it offers what is probably the best "fundamental universals about intergroup conflict".

3.2.1 Realistic Group Conflict Theory

In 1965, Campbell developed the Realistic Group Conflict Theory (RGCT), which is attributable to conditions of real conflict. The RGCT is grounded in social psychology, the discipline of Muzafer Sherif, who popularised the theory and who stresses the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to social concerns (Jackson, 1993). Over the years, various disciplines, including social psychology, anthropology and even management studies focusing on organisational groups rather than societal groups (van Knippenberg, 2002), have used this theory to determine intergroup attitudes and behaviour (Campbell, 1965). Regarded today as a firmly established theory of intergroup hostility, RGCT has been advocated and tested by theorists, including Sherif (1966); Sherif and Sherif (1953, 1979); Bobo (1983); Levine and Campbell (1966); and Esses et al. (1998).

To begin an analysis of intergroup tensions, it is critical to examine conflicting interests or goals. The RGCT proposes intergroup behaviour as a reflection of group interests, therefore "the quality of intergroup relations is… dependent on the relationship between the group's interests" (van Knippenberg, 2002: 8). Accordingly, "intergroup threat and conflict increase as the perceived competition for resources increases between groups, and as the conflicting groups have more to gain from succeeding" (Esses et al., 1998: 701). The struggle over material resources like land, gold, oil etc., for example, is a source of intergroup conflict (Liu, 2012). Furthermore, the level of hostility is dependent on the extent of intergroup threat, thus "the greater the intergroup threat and conflict, the more hostility is expressed toward the source of the threat" (Esses et al., 1998: 701). Finally, when groups compete over resources, the closeness of contact between them increases hostility rather than decreases it (Ibid: 1998). Per Jackson (1993: 3), intergroup hostility stems from "the existence of conflicting goals" and is "reduced by the existence of mutually desired superordinate goals attainable only through intergroup cooperation".

Similarly, Sherif and Sherif (1979) determine the favourability of intergroup interactions by the reciprocal interests and goals of the groups involved. Thus, groups' interests are critical in determining the quality of intergroup relations. A central tenet of RGCT emphasises the rationality of intergroup conflict, in that "groups do have incompatible goals and are in competition for scarce resources" (Campbell, 1965: 287). Therefore, the assertion is that if the goals of the groups are compatible, there will be no competition, hence attitudes and behaviour will be positive or at least neutral. However, if the goals are incompatible, and a gain for one group means a loss for another group, attitudes and behaviour will invariably be negative and hostile (Eicher, 2010), especially towards the out-group, which will be unfavourably stereotyped. Stereotypes become standardised over time, resulting in a higher "degree of intergroup social distance" (Jackson, 1993: 4). Prejudice against the out-group invariably results in strengthening of intragroup relations, perpetuating further hostilities. Bobo (1983) states that negative perceptions and prejudiced attitudes are not formulated or internalised in early childhood socialisation, but rather from a perception of real and tangible threat to the self or in-group; as such, as noted earlier, the existence of superordinate goals work to change attitudes. More importantly, RGCT is also concerned with the causes and resolutions of intergroup hostility (Jackson, 1993). Proponents claim that in intergroup conflict, the groups strategically assess each other, and based on "complex strategic considerations" (for instance an appraisal of their relative strengths, perceptions about the intentions of the group etc.), may decide "to cooperate, compete, or strike a certain balance between cooperation and competition" (Bornstein, 2009: 1). Takács (2012) notes that occasional contact does not improve intergroup relations. Rather superordinate goals motivate in-group members to reformulate opinions about the out-group and to view them in a more favourable way; this reduces friction and the use of stereotypes and increases cooperation and acceptable behaviours towards the out-group.

To test the theory empirically, Sherif et al. (1961) undertook three large-scale field experiments with eleven and twelve-year-old middle class white-boys, who had no pre-existing relationship, at a summer camp. They spent two weeks in the camp and placed the boys in two groups with assigned spaces.

> Each group spontaneously developed a history of in-group interactions with a distinct organisation structure and a set of norms. In a sense, two 'cultures' evolved. The boys cooperated with each other and developed a sense of pride and accomplishment … thus, as predicted, common goals united the boys into cohesive, cooperating groups (Jackson, 1993: 7).

The groups were later made aware of each other's presence, resulting in the distinction between 'us' and 'them' (Eicher, 2010). Intergroup hostility emerged when the groups were made to compete in a game in which a gain for one group meant a loss for the other. The two groups showed hostility by disrespecting each other's flag, calling each other names and playing tricks on one another. After a

series of negative attitudes were observed, various superordinate goals were introduced, for which the two groups had to cooperate, to reduce the conflict. The theory was validated when collaborations lessened hostility to the point where by the end of the camp, the two groups wanted to ride back on the same bus together (Sherif et al., 1961). According to Liu (2012), superordinate goals effected cooperation between the two groups, whereas admonitions, negotiations and joint social activities proved ineffective. In a nutshell, conflict emerged as a result of a conflicting situation – the presence of incompatible goals over resources – and it was resolved by addressing this conflict situation.

Numerous studies have, over the years, found that intergroup competition elicits in-group bias and hostile attitudes towards out-groups in adolescents (Rabble and Horwitz, 1969) and adults (Blake and Mouton, 1962) as well as in children; and in contexts of racism (Bobo, 1983) and immigration (Esses et al., 1993). The theory has been criticised for being less definite about individual rationality; Esses et al. (1993) assume that in intergroup conflict, rather than pursuing individual interests, group members are primarily concerned with the interests of the group. However, Bornstein (2009) writes that if rationality is associated with groups' interests in competing, individual interest is also rational. Put another way, it is in the best interests of individual group members to compete since the benefits that accrue to the group (e.g. power, money, prestige, lands etc.) "cannot be denied to the individual group members, regardless of whether or how much they contributed to their group's success" (Ibid: 1). Thus, the problem of freeriding arises. Since the benefits are public goods for all group members, and contributions could be costly (in terms of time, money and efforts), the rational members of the group have reason to free ride. As the theory postulates the rationality of the members, if everyone free rides, the group loses the competition and hence the public good. Moreover, while RGCT holds that the existence of competition erodes intergroup relations and that they improve when there are superordinate goals, a number of studies find that competition becomes a detriment only if group members strongly identify with it, while others have shown that superordinate goals may not be enough to remove intergroup prejudice (Brewer and Brown, 1998; van Knippenberg, 2002). Furthermore, while this theory mimics the kind of conflict that plagues communities with lots of migrants, especially where there is belief that this increases competition for scarce resources, the main criticism of the theory is the methodological approach it adopts and its apparent neglect of ethical considerations on the part of the subjects (McLeod, 2008). The theory advocates group interest over individual preferences. However, what may be fundamental to the group's interests may not be desirable to individual members. As Taylor & Moghaddam said (1987: 34), "people are selfish and will try to maximise their own rewards", thus eliciting cooperation with out-group members and neglecting in-group sentiments.

While there is no doubt that RGCT is a well-grounded theory in intergroup relations, there appear to be other factors, mentioned above, in which it falls short. Or, as van Knippenberg suggests (2002: 10),

"we need a more complex account of the relationship between group interests and intergroup behaviour than can be provided by RGCT".

3.2.2 Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (SIT), postulated by Tajfel and Turner in a period marked as the 'crisis in social psychology', is grounded "on the assumption that people strive for a positive self-concept" (Eicher, 2010:9). While RGCT emphasises the "degree of compatibility of interests" (van Kippenberg, 2002: 9), SIT, counted among Social Categorisation Theories of Intergroup Relations (though there are slight variances with Social Categorisation Theory; see Turner et al., 1987), emphasises categorisation into groups. More importantly, it focuses on "the group in the individual" (Hogg and Abrams, 1988: 3). Furthermore, while in RGCT mutually incompatible goals are considered sufficient to create intergroup conflict, in SIT social identity is the necessary condition for prejudice and discrimination between groups (Liu, 2012). Social identification is defined as a "process of locating oneself, or another person, within a system of social categorisations or, as a noun, to any social categorisation used by a person to define him/her and others" (Turner, 1982: 17-18).

In SIT, motivation rests on enhancing or "establishing positive social identity and self-esteem" for the group; this is more important than resources (e.g. power and money) (Rubin and Hewstone, 1998: 4). SIT posits that:

> …an individual's self-concept is derived from their knowledge of their membership within a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel, 1981: 255).

Turner (1982: 17) is more emphatic, writing that individuals configure:

> …the "perception of themselves and others by means of abstract social categories, that they internalise these categories as an aspect of their self-concepts, and that social-cognitive process relating to these forms of self-conception produce group behaviour.

However, a clear distinction is made between a person's social conduct, centred on feelings of proficiency, bodily characteristics, intellectual prowess and personal taste, and with more to do with personal identity; and social identity, premised on commonalities with others or on membership of various formal and informal groups or social categories; for instance, as a woman, a Buddhist, a Tory, a celebrity or black. The fundamental idea is that these categories are internalised in our minds as social identities, and that they form the basis of our behaviour in a given social context (Hornsey and Hogg, 2000).

Unlike identity theory, which identifies with the realities of particular roles, SIT emphasises the effects of associating oneself with a social group or category (Burke and Stets, 1998), giving primacy to 'who you are'. In simple terms, the "group membership reflects on the self, and consequently the

standing or status of the in-group also reflects on the self" (van Kippenberg, 2002: 12). The positioning of the group in relation to others reflects either positively or negatively on group members' social identities, thus individuals are motivated towards a 'positive social identity' by identifying with a group with higher status as well as striving to be salient as a group (Ibid). Similarly, a group with lower status may be galvanised by its members' internal and positive social identity (Tajfel, 1982). Thus, an individual's behaviour cannot be understood in isolation, because individuals 'depersonalise' and see themselves "more as the interchangeable representatives of some shared social category membership" (Turner et al., 1994). However, it is significant to note that sharing a social identity with others does not imply knowing or interacting with every member of the group; what is critical is the sharing of numerous features or events relevant to the group as well as to the individual member (Deaux, 2001). The assumption is that people feel that they belong to a social category and are differentiated from the other/outside group. As a result, when social identities are salient it is not uncommon to find solidarity and favouritism within in-groups (e.g. in-group loyalty), and prejudices and discrimination against out-groups, as part of the social identity process (Trepte, 2006; Jackson and Sherriff, 2013).

Testing the assumptions of SIT, Tajfel et al. (1971) found that when randomly selected strangers were introduced and asked to rate each other on a number of attributes, there was no trace of intergroup differentiation. However, when an intergroup categorisation was introduced and the subjects were allowed to identify themselves with an in-group or out-group, intergroup differentiation took place; the subjects clearly favoured in-group members. SIT has been used to discuss attitudes toward immigrants. Card et al. (2005) aver that in periods of high crime, even if immigrants are less likely to commit crime than indigenes, the burden of the crime shifts to members of the out-group (immigrants). This results in 'identity-reinforcing' for members of the indigenous population and may widen the gap between the two groups.

While RGCT allows the resolution of intergroup conflict, especially when there are enough resources for everyone, hypothetically, SIT is less optimistic about conflict resolution since intergroup conflict hinges on status and self-esteem established by group comparison (Liu, 2012). To resolve conflict based on social identity, it introduces a higher social categorisation, or superordinate category; for instance, indigenes and migrants might consider themselves first as galamsey operators or Ghanaians before acknowledging their ethnic differences.

3.2.3 Instrumental Model of Group Conflict (IMGC): An Extension to RGCT

The Instrumental Model of Group Conflict is relevant to the study since it is compatible with theories on unfavourable attitudes encountered by immigrants. Its proponents, Esses and her associates, building on RGCT, advance that:

> … a combination of resources stress and the salience of a potentially competitive out-group leads to perceived group competition for resources…. leads to attempt to remove the source of competition, using a variety of strategies (Esses et al., 1998: 702; 2004).

While the authors claim that it builds on RGCT, the model is a combination of RGCT and Social Identity Theory. Its main thrust is that conflict, tension and hostility intensify when there is increased resource stress and salience of the out-group. On this model, conflict reflects an attempt by the in-group to remove the source of the competition, including, but not limited to, the expression of negative attitudes and attributions, physical confrontations and avoidance by decreasing proximity with the out-group (Ibid).

When competing, groups perceive that their access to resources (including economic resources – jobs and money as well as power) is limited, this amounts to what the authors refer to as 'resource stress' (Ibid), with factors such as (1) "the scarcity of the resources (whether real or perceived), (2) the unequal distribution of resources and (3) the desire of an unequal distribution of resources, determine the degree of perceived resource stress" (Ibid: 702). They propose that if there is a perception of resource stress, there are not sufficient resources for all the groups. However, while resource stress is a sufficient condition for competition among groups, the necessary condition is the presence of a potentially competitive group. The salience and distinctiveness of a group may determine whether it is a potential competitor or not. An out-group is a potential competitor when it is different and salient from the in-group. However, though the distinct features and the large size of the out-group make it a threat to the in-group, it must equally have an interest in and the potential to access the same resources (Esses et al., 1998; 2004). Thus, the perception of group competition emerges due to the existence of resource stress, and of an out-group with the potential to obtain the resource.

To eliminate the source of competition, the authors propose three strategies in attitudes and behaviour: (1) Antagonistic behaviour and attributions as well as overt discriminatory behaviour towards the source of competition; (2) increased competitiveness through skill acquisition or "merely self-aggrandisement at the group level, in an attempt to convince one's own group and other groups of the in-group's entitlement to the resources in question"; and (3) reducing or repudiating group contact, either by denying territorial access to the out-group or by the in-group relocating (Esses et al., 1998: 705; 2004: 102).

The significance of IMGC is reflected in the migration-conflict nexus between host and migrants in gold mining communities. Grant et al. (2011) found that migration led to conflict as hostilities intensified against migrants over resource competition. Esses et al. (1998) demonstrated that resource stress coupled with the perception of competition between migrants and indigenes resulted in negative attitudes. Using media accounts, they found that participants (non-immigrants) formed the opinion that immigration decreased job availability to the host population when they read about the progress

of immigrants, and consequently they developed negative attitudes towards immigrants and immigration.

So far, RGCT (Sherif, 1966), IMGC (Esses et al., 1998; 2004) and SIT (Tajfel and Turner, 1986) have provided practical ways to discuss issues of why and under what conditions in-groups discriminate against out-groups such as immigrants. These theories assume that intergroup discrimination and prejudice arise because of incompatible goals and competition over material or economic resources, or symbolic (identity threat) resources (Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny, 2013). Put another way, the root cause of intergroup conflict is competition between rival groups for power, territory, economic and social incentives, or social identity (Takács, 2012). However, these theories and empirical evidence deal more with threats to the in-group (for instance, whites may perceive affirming action as threatening the overall interest of their in-group) than with how the out-group (immigrants) responds to prejudice, discrimination, and threat from the in-group (majority). Though there are subtle acknowledgements that superordinate goals may be pursued by both groups, theorists fail to state who initiates this.

3.2.4 Acculturation Theory

The final perspective is from the Acculturation Theory, which lays emphasis on the acculturation goals pursued by both majority and minority groups (Brown et al., 2007). At first glance, this theory seems to emphasise cooperation; however, conflictual relations between groups are inherent in it.

Acculturation became a subject of interest when earlier studies attempted to understand how Southern and Eastern European migrants were adjusting to life in the United States around the 1920s (Park, 1928). Over the years, studies in cross-cultural psychology have conclusively established how individuals relocating from one cultural jurisdiction to another have adapted or "re-established their lives in another" (Berry, 1997: 1). The classic definition is found in the research of Redfield et al. (1936, p. 149), where:

> Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups.

In more recent literature, acculturation has been described by Bourhis et al. (1997: 369-370) as a "process of bidirectional change that takes place when two ethno cultural groups come into contact with one another". However, much of the recent interest in the development of the theory has been through the immense contribution by Berry et al., who have developed a "sound conceptual base and a systematic and comprehensive analysis of empirical data" (Ward and Rana-Deuba, 1999).

In his seminal work, Graves (1967) distinguishes between changes in the "phenomenal order" of observable events and their regularities, termed 'cultural acculturation' by Berry (1997), and changes

in beliefs, attitudes and values, termed 'psychological acculturation'. Theoretically, this distinction is necessary, first, to distinguish between the systematic relationships between the two sets of variables; and second, because the acculturation experience of the individual differs from group experience in that the degree of acceptability of an individual to the community varies with group acceptability (Berry, 1970; 1997). In recent years, terms such as biculturation, multiculturation, integration and globalisation have been used interchangeably with acculturation. The term has become synonymous with assimilation (see Glazer and Moyinham, 1970). However, the use of the term 'assimilation' has been criticised as a unidimensional model, as this is only one kind of acculturation; acculturation can also be reactive, creative and disintegrative (The Social Science Research Council, 1954).

The central point of the theory is the understanding that many societies are culturally plural: this could be due to phenomenal immigration, which brings together different groups "as immigrants and members of a host society" (Zagefka and Brown, 2002: 171); or to power differences (such as political, financial, cognitive, emotional, or numerical), with labels such as 'mainstream' and 'minority' or 'dominant' and 'non-dominant' (Berry, 1997). The out-group (immigrants) bring their cultural and psychological qualities to the host society. The compatibility or incompatibility of cultures, values, attitudes and personalities sets in motion the acculturation process (Sam and Berry, 2010). There are two potential outcomes: (1) for the groups to live together harmoniously and agree on what changes are acceptable; or (2) to coexist with intergroup tension and conflict (Zagefka and Brown, 2002). The harmony or conflict between the 'cultural' groups depends on three variables: voluntariness (that is, whether the process of acculturation was entered into voluntarily by the groups, e.g. immigrants, refugees or indigenous people); mobility (whether the group migrated, e.g. immigrants or refugees, or was introduced to new cultures, e.g. indigenes); and permanence (whether the migration is permanent, e.g. economic or temporary, including asylum seekers, refugees, guest workers and international students) (Berry, 1997; Berry and Sam, 1996).

In his "fourfold paradigm", Berry (1974, 1984, 1994, 1996, and 1997) identifies two important issues of acculturation for both dominant and non-dominant groups and their members: maintenance of original cultural identity and its characteristics; and the extent of contact and relations with other group members. If the two issues are analysed simultaneously, four strategies of acculturation are generated: integration, separation, assimilation, and marginalisation. When individuals have an interest in maintaining their original culture as well as intergroup relations, they will endorse integration. According to Zagefka and Brown (2002), this is possibly the best acculturation strategy because immigrants are allowed to establish themselves in their own way while sharing common traits, norms etc. with the in-group. When individuals place value in maintaining their own culture, and avoid any intergroup relations, they adopt a separatist stance. Additionally, when immigrants abandon their cultural traits and norms and place value on intergroup relations, they are seen to

endorse assimilation. In this instance, immigrants take up the host society's cultural identity in order to become 'rightful members' of that society (Bourhis et al., 1997). Lastly, when individuals "value neither cultural maintenance nor intergroup relations" they are considered as marginalised (Ward and Rana-Deuba, 1999); this is acknowledged as the worst acculturation strategy (Zagefka and Brown, 2002).

So far, these strategies are placed in the domain of the non-dominant (immigrants) groups, and on the assumption that they have the free will to choose how to acculturate. This is seen in Fig 3.2, which shows the following two dimensions: (1) "Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's identity and characteristics?" and (2) "Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with larger society?" (Berry, 1997: 10). Any of the four strategies of acculturation can be employed by immigrants (either as individuals or groups). However, empirical evidence gathered from studies conducted by Berry et al. (1989) in North America found that of the four, the most preferred was integration, followed by assimilation, separation and marginalisation in that order.

Fig. 3.2. Acculturation Strategies

Dimension 2: Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with larger society?	Dimension 1: Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's identity and characteristics? YES	Dimension 1: Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's identity and characteristics? NO
YES	INTEGRATION	ASSIMILATION
NO	SEPARATION	MARGINALISATION

Source: Berry (1997); Borhis et al. (1977).

Bourhis et al. (1997) divide marginalisation into two substrategies: Anomie (characterised by immigrants who experience cultural alienation when they discard their own cultural identity and heritage as well as the host society's culture), and Individualism (when immigrants abandon both their own identity and norms and the host society's, not because they feel marginalised but because they adopt individualist lifestyles).

However, Berry (1984, 1997) and Bourhis et al. (1997) argue that acculturation does not rest solely with the out-group, but rather is an outcome of contact and interrelations between dominant and non-dominant groups. Accordingly, Bourhis et al. (1997) developed an "Interactive Acculturation Model" (IAM) which incorporates the following elements:

- acculturation orientations adopted by immigrant groups in the host community

- acculturation orientations adopted by the host community group towards specific groups of immigrants
- interpersonal and intergroup relational outcomes that are the product of combinations of immigrant and host community acculturation orientations. (c.f. Oerlemans and Peters, 2009: 461).

The IAM illustrates the preferred acculturation strategy of the host majority. Zagefka and Brown (2002) hold that, similarly to the options available to immigrants, the host majority also has preferences among the four strategies of acculturation of immigrant groups. A similar two-dimensional model is used to determine the acculturation strategy of the host society: "(1) Do you find it acceptable that immigrants maintain their cultural heritage? and (2) Do you accept that immigrants adopt the culture of your host community?" (Bourhis et al., 1997: 380). Using 'Host Community Acculturation Scale' (a seven-point Likert scale), a conceptual framework is developed, seen in Fig 3.3. Fig 3.3 shows the various acculturation strategies that the host could opt for.

Fig. 3.3 Host society acculturation strategy

Dimension 1:
Do you find it acceptable that immigrants maintain their cultural identity?

Dimension 2: Do you accept that immigrants adopt the cultural identity of the host community?	YES	NO
YES	INTEGRATION	ASSIMILATION
NO	SEGREGATION	EXCLUSION INDIVIDUALISM

Bourhis et al. (1997)

Integration is the preferred model if the host majority allows immigrants to maintain their culture while accepting that they adopt important features of the host culture. When the host members agree that immigrants should relinquish their culture and adopt their culture wholesale, the preference is for assimilation, where immigrants are eventually considered as fully-fledged members of the society. Segregation is the preferred choice if the host members are unwilling for immigrants to adopt their culture, but allow them to maintain their own. Lastly, when negative responses are obtained to both questions, this is classified either as Exclusion, when the host members deny immigrants the freedom to maintain their culture or to adopt the culture of the host, or as Individualism, when the host majority consider themselves and immigrants as individuals rather than as unified groups (Bourhis et al, 1997: 380-381).

IAM theorists maintain that the best acculturation outcome between the two groups can be predicted when their strategies are integrated, in a 'fit'. Three types of 'fit' are predicted: 1) consensual 2) problematic and 3) conflictual (see figure below). A 'fit' is consensual if there is mutual resolution between the groups to integrate or assimilate, and conflictual when the host majority repudiates any form of contact and interrelationship with outsiders, even though immigrants do not want to maintain their culture. All other combinations are an intermediate (problematic) level of fit (Bourhis et al., 1997; Zagefka and Brown, 2002).

Figure 3.4: Interactive Acculturation Model

Host community attitude	Immigrant Attitude				
	Integration	Assimilation	Separation	Anomie	Individualism
Integration	Consensual	Problematic	Conflictual	Problematic	Problematic
Assimilation	Problematic	Consensual	Conflictual	Problematic	Problematic
Segregation	Conflictual	Conflictual	Conflictual	Conflictual	Conflictual
Exclusion	Conflictual	Conflictual	Conflictual	Conflictual	Conflictual
Individualism	Problematic	Problematic	Problematic	Problematic	Consensual

Adapted from: Bourhis et al, (1997; Zagefka and Brown (2002)

Referring to Figure 3.4, it is clear how even in theory, acculturation is most difficult when two cultures coexist. In most cases, conflictual outcomes emerge resulting in intergroup conflict when separation, segregation, exclusion and anomie are the preferred strategies.

Similarly, Bourhis et al. (1997) found that immigrants who adopted integration have less acculturative stress, and that the reverse is true for those who opted for marginalisation. In his work on acculturative stress, Berry (1996 and 1997) emphasises the emotional side of the acculturation process, focusing on issues of psychological well-being and life-satisfaction (Sam and Berry, 2010). A stress reaction to acculturation is measured in how well or otherwise people adapt to the coming together of two distinct cultures. Berry (1997) suggests three points of view: 1) behavioural shifts (easy adaption); 2) acculturative stress (in situations where conflicts exist); and 3) psychopathology (where the experience exceeds the individual's ability to cope). Acculturation stress can be less, intermediate or more, depending on experiences of adaption. Bourhis et al. (1997) confirm that immigrants who opt for integration have less acculturative stress, while those who accept marginalisation experience more acculturative stress.

Berry's fourfold paradigm has come under serious criticism, including from Rudmin (2003), who finds in it a lack of proper statistical analysis and an excessive focus on minorities. Similarly, Escobar and Vega (2000) claim that the fourfold measure is ambiguous and lacks predictive power, and, most especially, is based on unconvincing cultural assumptions. Notwithstanding this, the acculturation model has been given credence by Navas et al. (2005) in their expanded IAM, known as the Relative Acculturation Expanded Model (RAEM) (see Sam and Berry, 2010).

3.3 Situating the Theories in the Present Study: Maintaining Peace or Deepening Conflicts

Conflict among groups has been one of the central research problems in the social sciences (Takacs, 2003). Similarly, the study of conflict has been characterised by diverse conceptualisation, thus Okoh (2013) asserts that research has been exceedingly complex. Various theoretical positions are advanced. For instance, Okoh (2013) found that Collier (2000) devoted his study to the objectives and incentives of conflict, Crammer (2002) uses the rational theories, and Nathan (2001) focuses on intra-state relations. While arguing that the occurrence of conflict in all societies made up of diverse groups is inevitable, Nathan (2001) claims a misconception among international actors in handling conflict, and proposes a radical framework focusing on intra-state crises. Advancing her position from a social constructivist approach, Stewart (2008) argues that the fundamental underpinning of group conflicts is the mobilisation of groups based on identity. She asserts that people see themselves distinctively and form groups based on such differences – "according to geography, behaviour, language, physical characteristics and so on". However, while there is no denying that the 'us' and 'them' can serve as the basis for conflict, various studies have revealed that the arguments go beyond identities to critical issues such as how power is distributed and exercised, whether economic, political or both.

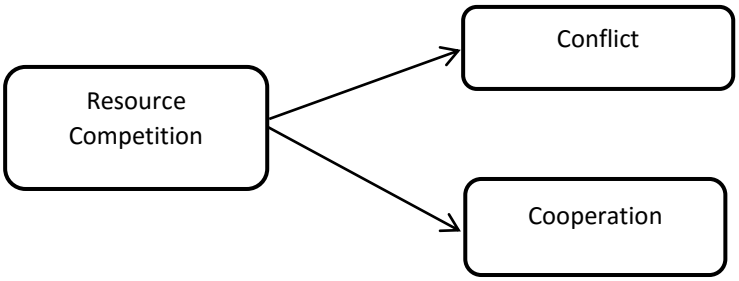
Thus, while there is no shortage of research on conflict in mining, Kemp et al. (2011) aver that a significant proportion of it has been devoted to high-profile cases. Incidentally, there is a vast literature on conflict and conflict resolution between large scale mining and ASM, large scale mining and community, and ASM and the state; various frameworks have been formed to identify and resolve these conflicts (see Calvano, 2008; Bebbington et al., 2008; Jenkins and Yakovleva, 2006; Kemp et al., 2010; Wilson, 2012; Ofosu-Mensah, 2011; Hilson, 2002; Galvin et al., 2009, Andrew, 2003; and Davis and Franks, 2011). However, there is silence about conflict within ASM groups and between ASM migrant populations and the host communities; and an appropriate framework to capture these developments is lacking. In his study in the cocoa sub-sector, Mitchell (2012) bemoans the lack of credible studies on the contemporary relations between indigenous and migrant populations in Ghana, and goes on to consider the prospect of peace or conflict between them in the cocoa growing regions of the country.

In recent years, immigrant issues have invoked passionate debates, especially on the attitudes of indigenous groups towards immigrants. The indigenous population, worried that the influx of

immigrants may change their way of life, values and norms (Danso and Lum, 2013) and fearful of their jobs, housing and territories, have often adopted prejudicial, xenophobic and hostile attitudes. Further studies have been carried out on the perception of indigenous/ in-group populations towards immigrants (Esses et al., 1998, 2004; Stephan et al., 1998; Bobo, 1983). However, Danso and Lum (2013) note that less is known about the immigrants' experiences and perceptions of non-migrants, and about the factors that influence immigrants' negative experiences. This study, among others, seeks to explore the experiences of migrant youth in gold mining communities in a conflicted terrain.

Allport (1954) holds that what is really at stake is not that people live together but the resultant effects. Consequently, he expresses the view that the coming together of many people from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds invariably leads to conflict. In the broader sense the present study is more concerned about social conflict between migrants and the indigenous people in artisanal mining communities, and is supported by earlier conflict theorists such as Coser (1956) and Collins (1975), who argue that conflict is an inalienable part of being human. There is, however, some degree of cooperation over natural resources among some actors. Ratner et al. (2013: 184) state that there is an increasing "awareness of the positive potential that cooperation around natural resources challenges can offer in reducing the risk of broader social conflict and violence". In their study of resource conflict, collective action and resilience, Ratner et al. are concerned with the patterns of conflict and cooperation in response to natural resource competition. They provide an insightful diagram which is adapted for this study and which lays the foundation for the various theories critical to it.

Fig. 3.5. Patterns of Conflict and Cooperation



Source: adapted from Ratner et al. (2013).

Fig. 3.5 shows the choice between conflict and cooperation available to the actors in resource competition, and these are appropriately captured in the choice of theories elaborated above. Bornstein (2009) had earlier stated that groups in intergroup conflict are confronted with the choice of cooperating, competing or striking a balance between the two, and these are the choices available to the indigenous population and migrants in this study. This is aptly captured in the theories above (similar to the study by Brown et al. (2007)). It is also important to find which option parties involved in gold mining will choose.

Furthermore, the relationship among actors influences their decisions when dealing with incompatible interests and goals. The power to incite any negative behaviour rests with the in-group; the outsiders or immigrants may have less influence and status, and are the ones frequently facing prejudice from the dominant group, and this is reflected in all the theories in predicting attitudes towards immigrants. However, the relative strength of the actors will be a predictor of the direction that intergroup relations will take. In a typical ASM setting, locals and immigrants normally compete for 'space' for mining and other activities, and thus the study will explore the relationships between these actors. Similarly, the issues of salience and distinctiveness are critical in determining the relationship between them. Though the role of the actors involved is important, the critical issue is the incompatibility of the positions of the two groups. Sherif and Sherif (1969) found that when the goals of the two groups are complementary, relations between them are positive, whereas when they are conflicting, relations are negative. However, in non-renewable resource competition such as in gold mining, there exists zero-sum competition, where when one group wins the other group loses. This situation is explicitly dealt with in the theories discussed.

The guide to placing these theories in the context of the study was whether they predicted intergroup attitudes and behaviour, especially among immigrants and non-migrant populations. Are they associated with conflict and violence? Do they consider peace and cooperation? Do they predict why and how these behaviours are exhibited? While RGCT and SIT identify conflict and hostility against minorities or immigrants and seek a resolution, there is no denying that this is also addressed in acculturation theory, though it is treated in a different way. In the examination of acculturation, integration and, in some cases, assimilation, we can find road maps to peace and cooperation, while the preference for marginalisation and separation leads to conflict.

The theories discussed investigate the relationship between two groups, when one group is the dominant (majority, in-group or non-immigrant) and the other non-dominant (minority, out-group or immigrant). While on their own each of these theories can form separate analyses, the combination of their key features serves as a lens to understand the dynamics in intergroup conflict within the context of the study. Furthermore, all the theories converge at Collins' three dimensions of resources (economic, power and cultural). While RGCT examines conflict *vis-à-vis* economic resources, SIT places it within the realm of status or power resources, and acculturation adopts cultural resources. The view here is that despite their seemingly different perspectives, all three of these theories share a common heritage in the work of Randall Collins. This is not far from Allport's view that group conflict and competition can occur over economic resources, social power, group status and social identity. The intergroup theories have shown how group competition for resources and the removal of the source of the competition are relevant to identifying intergroup conflicts, and to examining attitudes and behaviours towards immigrants. Recent studies have used these theories to explore the

experiences and perception of immigrants (Mattessich and Hope, 2000; Hadley and Pati, 2009; Danso and Lum, 2013), while others have studied both groups (Ember, 1981; Jackson and Sherriff, 2013; Oerlemans and Peeters, 2009; Brown et al., 2007).

3.4 Synthesising the Various Underlying Concepts

The analytical theories adopted in this thesis include; the Realist Group Conflict Theory (RGCT), Social Identity Theory (SIT), Instrumental Model of Group Conflict (IMGC) and Acculturation strategies. These theories are relevant because, firstly, they address issues with regard to ingroup (host) and outgroup (migrant) relations and secondly, they have all in different ways examined the challenges and changes that migrants and the host face respectively. The adoption of these has been fundamental following Berry's (2001) research, in which a clear distinction is made between intergroup relation research, which includes the first three theories and acculturation strategies.[11] The former largely focuses on the study of attitudes by the majority towards immigrants, while the latter concentrates on perceptions and experiences of the minority. Despite creating the impression that intergroup relations research and acculturation theories are designed for a specific set of population, theoretically they can be applied to both the ingroup and outgroup. In recent times, several authors have rationalised the adoption of either of the research approaches in the study of both majority and minority groups. A study by Brown and Zagefka (2011: 141) found several studies which examined "systematic links between intergroup relations variables and acculturation preferences". This thesis adopts both perspectives within the context of both the host and migrant groups, however, with specific emphasis on the account, perception and experiences of the latter. This approach, as well as promising fresh ideas about group conflicts and improving relations within galamsey, elucidates key variables and linkages between intergroup relations and acculturation strategies. The literature highlights three essential variables of intergroup relations and conflicts: Economic, Social and Cultural. These are discussed in sequence.

Firstly, drawing insights from RGCT and IMGC, intergroup threat and conflict arise due to the perception of competition for resources between the groups. The term resource refers to any economic resource (Esses et al., 1988) such as land and gold. Scarcity, the perception that one group has unequal access to the resource and incompatible goals, where a gain for one group results in the other group losing out, precipitates competition between the groups which fuels intergroup conflict. Aside from competition over economic resources being the source of conflict, the level of hostility is dependent on the level of threat and the closeness of contact between the groups. Principally, the theories posit the rationality of the groups, such that conflict only arises when the groups perceive that they have incompatible goals and are in competition for scarce economic resources. Secondly,

[11] While the choice of analytical model for this thesis is the Instrumental Model of Group Conflict, Realist Group Conflict and Social Identity theories are presented in the discussion as the model builds from these theories.

socially the condition for prejudice and discrimination exists when groups are categorised as "us" and "them". The social conditions for conflict postulated by SIT and IMGC reveal that when groups are differentiated or distinct, they are likely to see themselves as potential competitors. Thus, the salience of an outgroup creates the necessary condition for intergroup conflict. However, an outgroup may not be entirely distinct from the ingroup but factors such as their large size or unique appearance can create conditions that makes them distinct and standout as potential competitors.

Finally, when two groups come into contact numerous changes take place in their original cultural patterns. Identified here as Acculturation, this was initially applied to strategies adopted by the outgroup to coexist peacefully or in conflict with the ingroup. However, acculturation does not solely rest with the outgroup and has been extended overtime to include strategies preferred by the host. Notions of acculturation strategies include language, food preferences, lifestyles and practices, beliefs and norms. The best outcome of acculturation as earlier identified is integration, where the outgroup maintains their culture while at the same time accepting some important elements of the ingroup's culture. The worse form is marginalisation, exclusion and individualism, when both groups reject the culture of each other.

The various concepts and key variables overall provide useful insights into how the relationship between host and migrants are affected by resource/economic competition, prejudice and attitudes. It gives focus in applying the various elements illustrated to understanding contemporary issues of intergroup relations and conflict in galamsey. For instance, are skilled galamsey migrants considered as competitors and a major source of threat to the host? And how does the host respond when faced with potential competition from a salient outgroup in terms of size, "distinctive appearance and behaviour" (Esses et al., 1988: 706).

3.5 Conclusion

When we question the notion of conflict, attention is drawn to manifestations of violence, destruction and societal breakdown, which Parsons has viewed as a disease. However, this assertion has been challenged. Conflict can also be a social process which, despite its transformational effect, resulting in progress that can bind society together. In this chapter, a comprehensive theoretical understanding of conflict has been explored, focusing on the concept, its definition and the variables. In the process, a careful examination of selected theories of intergroup relations and conflict has been undertaken, which has provided an underpinning for analysing host-migrant relations and conflicts. Lastly, how best these theories fit the context of this study has been discussed.

The study of conflict is broad, complex and multidimensional and has attracted the attention of many scholars. Over the years, conflict practitioners have attempted a general theory of conflict. However, despite the extensive and years devoted to its study and also due to the fact that the processes and forms are similar within various disciplines, however, isolation and a lack of consensus have

prevented an integrated approach to the study of conflict. Many authors have questioned the necessity and desirability for a general theory due to the different and often fundamental "aspects of each particular kind of conflict" (Fink, 413). The difficulty appears when setting limits within which a generalised theory is confined and this has been a challenge to practitioners, especially due to the ambivalent nature of conflict.

To Benard (1957: 35) "conflict has been variously conceived; and these varying conceptions have influenced the methodological approach to the problem which has been used, the nature of the problems studied, the theory invoked to interpret the data gathered, the implications for policy". She labelled her conceptualisations to conflict as: the social psychological; the sociological; and the semanticist. A similar distinction in the study of conflict is made by Groom (1988: 114), who states that "what we think causes conflict determines what we think we can do about it". Groom (1988), however, traces his approach within the domain of international relations. He identified three approaches: the realist, the world society and the structuralist approaches. At the core of the realist theoretical approach is the primacy of the state, seen as the dominant actor and that the drive to dominate (power politics) is central to the cause of conflict. Overtime, however, the state-centric approach has been expanded to include sub-state actors, who it is suggested acted "rationally and with security, and the maximisation of power a necessary goal for each state under a system of anarchy (WOWTE, 2011:1). Thus, the state will engage in conflict with others if it is rational and a necessary step to advance its interest. As such, if the interest of a state is incompatible with others, for example, conflictual relations over economic resources, the "state will use force to attain its goals if, after assessing the prospects for success, it values those goals more than it values the pleasures of peace" (Waltz, 2001: 160).

On the other side, but not necessarily distinctive is the approach advocated by the world society theorists. Even though both approaches concur that conflict is rational and ubiquitous, the world society approach holds that it is not caused by man's instincts to dominate. Conflict is rather "a response to an actor's perception of the environment" (Groom, 1988: 107). As such, the cause of conflict is not necessarily due to power politics, but rather when acceptable means of handling conflict break down or are absent (Ibid). To advocates of the World Society paradigm conflict is dysfunctional and a poor strategy, as the goal of the actors is to address their fears through satisfying basic needs and security through cooperation. The third approach has its leanings within the Marxist's perspective and places emphasis on structures. Conflict takes place when an actor or group is constrained by the structure or in the strict sense, when structural changes act to constrain an actor or a group. Fundamentally, conflict is inevitable when an exploitative relationship exists which seeks to discriminate based on class, race and religion (Groom, 1988).

Despite their different theoretical leanings, scholarship has recognised conflict as synonymous with the struggle over status, power and scarce resources; such that it arises when an individual or group believes that, it is the only way to guarantee the attainment of incompatible goals. Deconstructing the literature on conflict, I have highlighted that conflict arises when it involves more than one actor; where an incompatible goal exists; and where hostility and conflict behaviour are the surest way to prevent the other individual or group from attaining that goal.

This chapter has looked at four selected theories of intergroup relations, including RGCT, SIT and Acculturation, which provide an understanding of the actions and strategies adopted by one group against the other. Importantly, these theories throw light on actors' perception that one group(s) is a threat, and the strategies that they adopt to remove the source of this threat. While RGCT cites economic reasons, SIT sees identity as the cause of intergroup conflict. However, in analysing the meanings behind intergroup conflict, IMGC combines the conceptual frameworks of RGCT and SIT. They highlight that competition for resources and the salience of groups are a precipitate to intergroup conflict. Acculturation, despite its hesitancy on what and who causes intergroup conflict, provides a deeper understanding of host-migrant integration and its aftereffects.

Despite criticisms, these theories provide, perhaps, the best explanations of the outcomes of host-migrant relations. For instance, I highlight recent usage of these theories to explain the experiences and perceptions of migrants, and this provides a solid theoretical background for this study. However, a major criticism of the theories has been the dominance of positivist, experimental or quasi-experimental approaches to understanding intergroup relations. As Jackson and Sherriff (2013: 260) note:

> While not denying that experimental designs have a place in the study of intergroup relations, such approaches fail to expose the important complexities of real-life social contexts. They fail to ascertain participants' understandings and explanations of group memberships that are salient in their day-to-day lives, usually disregarding how intra- and intergroup relations are produced, experienced and understood by the research participants.

An advantage of qualitative research in intergroup relations is that the findings it generates are contextually sensitive, persuasive and relevant, and they capture numerous intricate details of intergroup relations. While not discounting the importance and relevance of quantitative methodologies in intergroup studies, various recent studies have adopted qualitative approaches in their analyses, including those of Gannon (2000), NRCIM (2000), Henwood and Pidgeon (1992), Goodall (2010) and Jackson and Sherriff (2013). By extension, the following chapter undertakes an in-depth look at the methodology for the study, explaining the rationale behind the adoption of a qualitative methodology and exploring concepts, context and actual field operations for the study.

Chapter Four

Methodology

4.0 Overview

This chapter provides the methodological framework. It discusses the theoretical issues concerning the study's design and the approach and methods used to collect data. It also describes some ethical issues, my role as a researcher, and the research challenges.

Different methodological approaches may be appropriate to studies on youth experiences and perceptions; however, the epistemological and ontological position of the researcher determines the preference of one approach over the other(s). Appropriately, the choice of method reflects the choice of the objects of the study, which reveal a particular approach to reality. This study is based largely on qualitative data and relies on document review, semi-structured interviews, observation and focus group discussion. The chapter is divided into three main sections. In the first section, I discuss the conceptual stance that frames this study. I examine two theoretical approaches and their relevance to the study. The next section outlines the choice of methods, the selection of a design for the study and the data collection instruments; it includes a brief description of the study area and the reasons for the choices of site and participants. The final section reflects on the research process, capturing issues such as ethical concerns, the role of the researcher (positionality and reflectivity), and the research challenges.

4.1 Conceptual Underpinning

This research is placed within the constructivist paradigm and uses the actor-oriented approach. Constructivism posits that there is "no objective truth waiting for us to discover… but rather truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities in our world" (Crotty, 1998: 8). That is not to say that there is no reality; rather, that the constructivist view of reality is not derived from individual observation, but has emerged from social relationships and interactions with others in the community. The pivotal, and simplistic, notion of constructivism is that we 'construct' our world through human conversation and cultural practices (Gergen, 1999: Oulasvirta et al., 2005). While constructivism recognises that all knowledge is 'constructed', it does not reflect any transcendent reality, but is contingent on human perception and social experience, crediting actors as active 'constructors' of context. Thus, the individual is an active participant in the construction of meaning based on his perspectives, perceptions and experiences.

From this viewpoint, the research aimed to understand how research participants gave meaning to their individual and shared experiences in the context of the study. It was the research participants who imposed meaning on the world rather than vice-versa. In her study on the challenges of Ethiopian street youth, Walls (2010: 852) adopted the constructivist approach because it lessened "the possibility of the researchers reconstructing or deconstructing participants' reality of their daily

experiences of being homeless and the unique barriers that went along with this status". Similarly, I observed the realities of the lives of migrant youth miners as the main participants, and constructed ideas and meaning from their voices in the field (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). That is, conceptualising their experiences, strategies, actions and how they eked a living in a contested, conflicted terrain, and the unique risks encountered in an environment such as ASM.

In an actor-oriented approach, youth were placed at the centre of the study, with the observations taking place in their work environment, their surroundings and their own world. Norman Long's actor-oriented approach critiques the two main structural theories of development: 'Modernisation' and 'Marxist' theories. Following Preston (1996), Long (2001) advocated a theoretical shift from structural explanations to an actor-focused analysis. While not discounting the power or expressive force of external intervention, the actor-oriented approach held that the influence of external actions in changing developmental and life-worlds of individual and social groups had influence only when people took actions that shaped their perceptions and daily life experience. The actor-oriented approach is premised on "an understanding of the individual as an active subject, with the capacity to process social experience and to invent new ways of coping with life" (Brun, 2005: 15). In the literature review section, we found abundant literature to support our understanding of youth as both agents and victims. However, the popular narrative has been to associate youth as destructive and incapable of handling their bustling force. In here, however, they are perceived as actors with the capacity to choose, bring about change and even, to a large extent, resist being overwhelmed, within the context of particular structures and even by their own agency (Lewis, 1993). The assumption here is that a youth is a rational actor and, all things being equal, has the capacity to choose from a range of alternatives (Wegerich, 2001).

As well as placing youth as a focal point of this study, the actor-oriented approach provided a method to investigate how youth gave meanings and interpretations to their everyday experiences. This was informed by Byrant and Bailey (1997: 23), who suggested that the actor-oriented approach provided insights that illuminated "conflicts (cooperation too) as outcomes of the interaction of different actors pursuing often quite distinctive aims and interests". Thus, to be adequately informed about these outcomes, as is the aim of this study, was to understand the actions of the actors involved in the creation of reality.

This study, as has been explained, saw youth as a critical component in migratory flows/trends, as well as active members of ASM communities. Thus, using the actor-oriented approach, it was envisaged that the relevant issues of these young people – their views, perceptions, fears, prospects and activities as migrant miners – would be brought to the fore. Verhoeven et al. (2007) observed that aside from their distinct way of perceiving and dealing with aspects of everyday life (ways that could be advantageous as well as otherwise), young people differed in their perception of their own agency.

Central to this position were the struggles and negotiations that often took place among individuals and/or groups of actors with different and often conflicting ideas and aspirations. Regarding this study, Verhoeven et al. (2007) stated that young people were not aware that they were protagonists in their own lives and those of others, or that they could influence their future and their surroundings. This is the case in sub-Saharan Africa, where youth were a marginalised and vulnerable category without a voice. Similarly, though they constituted a significant category in ASM settings, researchers had not given them the platform to express their aspirations and perceptions. Wikan (1990) offered an interpretation of the Balinese social practice "that unless this composite and complex nature of social order is also represented in our anthropological accounts, we risk depicting Balinese … as people without hearts and without compelling personal concerns". This narrative is pertinent to the study of migrant youth in their everyday experiences of coping with the crises, hardships and toil of illegal gold mining. A critical investigation is needed to uncover the particulars of identity, interest, aspirations and motivations, or we risk the media and political elites continuing to characterise youth as 'breakers' of society.

This study gave young people a voice to express their experiences and how they perceived their influence and ability to generate change in conflict situations. From an actor-oriented perspective, it considered young people to be architects of their own destiny, with the capacity to affect situations and influence outcomes as well as to take personal responsibility for the course of their own lives. According to Bury (2008), as well as allowing the researcher to analyse the relationship among all the stakeholders in a particular setting, the actor-oriented approach provided the basis of a detailed understanding of specific actors. As a prerequisite for an actor-oriented approach focusing on young people, Bury (2008: 309) argued that "researchers needed to adopt a set of methodological approaches that accommodated the need for contingency and flexibility as well as exhibited the flair for creativity".

4.2 Methods

4.2.1 Assumptions and Rationale for a Qualitative Method

This research investigated the livelihood experience of young migrant miners in a risk and conflict setting by sampling the viewpoints of a range of actors, particularly on issues concerning disputes and conflicts among migrant artisanal youth miners and their host communities. It provided insight into how these young migrants chose mining as a career in the midst of insecurity, conflict, and uncertainty, and into the nature of the host-migrant relationship within ASM communities. A qualitative approach was appropriate to an investigation of the plight of these young migrant miners; to the nature of the risks encountered in their daily operations; and to a critical examination of the complex relationships between migrant ASM operators and indigenous miners on one hand, and the community on the other.

The informality and the illegal nature of ASM presented an added element of complexity and sensitivity (IPIS, 2012), making a qualitative approach appropriate to this study. Studies by Ellis and MacGaffey (1996), Losby et al. (2002), Nordstrom (2007), DeRoche and Lahman (2008) and Meagher (2010) found that due to the inherent difficulties and lack of accurate and reliable statistics on the informal sector and its activities, a qualitative approach was appropriate to data collection. Also, this approach allowed for flexibility and created the opportunity for detailed discussion of critical issues.

The purpose and goals of the research necessitated a rigorous methodology to investigate the unique interactions in ASM communities between migrant youth miners and locals; to obtain a better and detailed understanding of their experiences; and to interpret what was happening to them and their environment (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994; Patton, 2002). The choice of methodology was taken with Locke et al.'s assertion that it should be influenced by the researcher's personal experience and goals in mind (1993); however, it was also influenced by its compatibility with the goals, research questions and activities that would be involved in the study. A qualitative research approach lent itself to explaining, exploring and describing the phenomena under investigation, especially where there was limited knowledge about the subject of study (Marshall and Rossman, 1995; Brown et al., 2002). Similarly, qualitative research situated the study "by examining the social settings and the individuals who inhabited these settings", avoiding a disadvantage of quantitative research, whose conclusions may fail to fit reality (Berg, 2001: 6). Elaborating on this approach, Berg (2001) explained that it was an effective way to describe the understanding and perceptions of others and explored how people structured and gave meaning to their daily lives. Lofland (1971) qualified this by suggesting four mandates for qualitative research: to be close to the people or the situation to understand the details of daily life; to be factual, that is, capturing what is seen and what people say; to describe the participants and their activities, interactions and settings; and data must include direct quotes to a large extent. An investigation into the experiences of illegal-informal activities such as ASM was most effective when the researcher got close to people, interacting with them to understand what went on in these settings.

The authors from Family Health International (FHI) advocated qualitative research for its value in providing insights and its effectiveness in revealing the stories and experiences of individuals, households or groups of people or a community (FHI, 2002). Qualitative research is defined as "a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning"; according to Shank (2002, c.f. Ospina, 2004: 2) it is systematic (planned and ordered); empirical (based on sound research and experience); and is an "inquiry into meaning, allowing researchers to understand how others make sense of their experience" (Ospina, 2004: 2). Over the years, qualitative research has increasingly been recognised for its advantages over other methods such as experimental and quantitative methods, which were insufficient to explain social phenomena (Ospina, 2004). Despite the many nuanced traditions of

qualitative research, Marshall and Rossman (1999) categorised it into three main strands: 1) individual lived experiences; 2) society and culture; and 3) language and communication. Of relevance is the individual lived experience, since the study was meant to elucidate the lived experiences of youth, unearthing particular meanings and understandings of their lives as migrant artisanal miners.

Overall, a qualitative methodology was chosen for this study for its ability to provide a deeper understanding of the social world; for its effectiveness with a small sample size; and for its employment of interactive data collection methods (Radwan, 2009). As Silverman (2011) pointed out, qualitative methodology appreciated the nuances of the social world and allowed the researcher to closely associate him/herself with the world and the people under study, as well as to become acquainted with their daily experiences and struggles. A qualitative approach "captures people's lived experience", making it suitable "for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of life: their perceptions, assumptions, prejudgments, presuppositions… and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them" (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 10). In researching young people's lives, Morch (2005) preferred qualitative methods of finding the reasons and meanings for their choices. Miles and Huberman (1994: 10) found a strong justification for qualitative research in its "richness and holism, with strong potential for revealing complexity…. [and that it provides] 'thick descriptions' that were vivid, nested in a real context, and had a ring of truth that had strong impact on the reader".

In this study, quantitative methods as an attempt to explain human behaviour in measurable terms would not yield much success, since its findings were limited to 'how much' or 'how many'. A qualitative approach, on the other hand, could answer the "why" questions, broadening our knowledge of the social world and our understanding of why things were the way they were and why people acted the way they did (Hancock, 2002). Kauppinen (2005: c.f. Puuronen, 1997) wrote that in recent times, the need for researchers to get close to youth and interact with them had necessitated the shift from an earlier emphasis on quantitative methodologies. Honkasalo (2005: 145) agreed: though she pointed out that previous youth studies emphasised surveys, interviews and statistical methods, she adopted qualitative methods in her research on young immigrants. She regarded the participants as "…. a group whose views, interpretations and expressions of everyday life were seen to be best recorded with qualitative methods, which were sensitive to power relations between the researcher and the ones researched and the research setting in itself". This was important for the present study as it was impossible to quantify the interpretations and experiences of young migrant artisanal miners. Similarly, strict quantitative methods were not particularly suited for this study which involved a highly migratory group. Also, coverage of the youth population could be inadequate where a proper sampling frame was strictly adhered to, and the sample may be distorted when individuals did not respond or had moved away due to news of a mineral strike elsewhere.

Heemskerk (2005: 85) explained that data within ASM communities was difficult to come by. Listing the barriers to data collection, including "poor field records, fear of government intervention, distrust of outsiders, the transient nature of miners, dangerous terrain to the researchers, cultural barriers", she and others asserted that qualitative methods could be relied upon. For instance, in a situation where the participants were secretive, reasonable estimates could be made using the various qualitative methods of data collection. This situation was not unique; the main target of this study (migrant youth), and the location, may be subject to all the barriers listed above.

Research in rural areas in developing countries is daunting, since the researcher may face uncertainties and irregularities; this necessitated a research methodology that is flexible and emergent. Creswell (2007) stated that the qualitative research process evolved continually during the period of fieldwork. The questions, forms of data collection, individuals to be studied and the sites to visit may all change or be refined. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) affirmed that it was not pre-specific in intention, but evolutionary, with the problem statement, design, interview questions and interpretations developing and changing along the way. This was important for this study since, in common with almost all ASM communities in Ghana and other sub-Saharan African countries, it was set in a rural area and was subject to uncertainties and irregularities. Thus, the adoption of a qualitative approach allowed for flexibility and for the need to improvise in response to unexpected change.

In addition, qualitative research was used in this study because it allowed for the collection and analysis of data from multiple sources. As Flick (2006) noted, it lent itself to the recognition and analysis of different perspectives. The views of various stakeholders (e.g. government officials, leaders of mines, opinion leaders) were solicited to give an in-depth and clear understanding of the happenings in ASM communities as they unfolded.

The context for the study, ASM, is now recognised as a sub-sector in the mining industry and is well established in academic literature and in policymaking circles. While much had been written about this, I believed that there was much still to be unravelled, and that qualitative research methodology was well positioned to provide explanations as to why people, especially those in developing countries, have been increasingly attracted to the industry over the years despite its numerous risks and conflicts. Qualitative research thus sought to understand the meanings that the research participants attributed to their experiences, circumstances, and situations. Holdaway (2000) held that qualitative research provided the medium by which meanings were constructed and negotiated within particular social contexts. Finally, a qualitative research method was adopted for its distinctive focus on individuals and groups. As well as the opportunity to work and interact closely with the research participants, it also permitted the researcher a way to understand the realities of insiders in the social context under study.

4.2.2 Case Study Selection

In this study, young people, a marginalised and vulnerable category, were prioritised as important stakeholders in artisanal mining. They were characterised as a group with assets, agency and dynamism, who were critical players in conflict, its prevention, peace-building, and post-conflict situations. This study adopted a case study approach, since its focus was on an understanding of a given situation and context (Potter et al., 2010). The goal, and other aspects such as resources and time constraints, were considered in the choice of design; and the focus on research questions, participants and the versatility of the design meant that a case study approach was appropriate here.

A compelling factor in the choice of case studies was the desire for an in-depth understanding of the relationship between migrant youth ASM operators and the host community, with a focus on the perceptions and experiences of these young migrant miners. Yin (2012) noted that while the case-study approach went beyond isolated cases or variables, it uses a varied set of sources. It was adopted here to permit multiple levels of analysis within a single study. Combined data collection methods such as observation, focus group discussions and interviews, evidenced in words or statistics, contributed to a greater depth of information (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Yin (2009: 18) noted some considerations for a case study: it should be based on the questions being posed (the how and why questions); the researcher should not be in the position to control the behaviour of those under study; and the focus is "on a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context". The latter point further justified the use of a case study approach, since youth had become a prospective as well as a destructive entity, especially just before and after the Arab Spring. Frederiksen and Munive (2010: 251) held that:

> The youth provide the lens through which we study the complexities of globalization and how global trends enter African localities and foster bright ideas, social movements and economic activities that in their turn influence global politics and development.

This study focused on youth within an ASM environment, since they had become central actors in late modern society (Morch, 2005). More appropriately, the case study approach favoured data collection in natural settings (Yin, 2012) and revealed the unique characteristics of social phenomena in different locations. In this study, empirical investigation was carried out into the dynamic interrelationship between migrant ASM operators and the host communities at the sites in which mining took place.

In deciding to adopt a case study as a research strategy, the researcher is confronted with an array of case study types, however, the selection of which type should fulfil a particular purpose or the researcher's own interest (see Robson, 1993). For instance, Stake (2005) argued that there were times when social issues were particularly complex, situational and problematic, making the choice of a case rather difficult. However, he suggested that the researcher should look at the various issues in reality and select particular cases that may engender their interest and offer the opportunity to learn.

While the focus of the study was on youth, the case under consideration was the communities where the study took place. The study was undertaken within artisanal mining communities in the Birim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana. This selection of the region, the district and subsequently the communities were based on assumptions which made it not only unique but purposive to the study.[12] This setting presented added complexities, since in some ASM sites and communities, youth were prone to less risk and conflict, while in others risk and conflict may be pervasive. This was reflected in Yin's assessment (2009: 18) that a researcher should use a case study in pursuit of understanding that "encompasses important contextual conditions, which were highly pertinent to the phenomenon under study".

However, while using case study sought to develop rich and comprehensive understandings about the phenomenon under study, it may not necessarily inform debates among policymakers on youth development initiatives. However, Stake (2000) averred that while generalisation may not be all bad, particularisation deserved much praise. Hsieh (undated, after Stake, 2005) agreed with other methodologists that the central issues of a case study were its particularity, complexity and boundedness. Particularity and complexity referred to the behaviour of the unit of analysis under study. The choice of a case study was also influenced by triangulation, which Stake (2005) identified as an important concept of case study. This was defined as the "process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning and verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation" (ibid: 454). This study used methodological triangulation of multiple qualitative data collection methods, drawing on a range of techniques including semi-structured interviews, observation, life histories and focus group discussions. Triangulation was a useful approach (Guion et al., 2011), employed in this research to provide a more comprehensive view of experiences of young migrants in artisanal mining communities and to explore their relationship with the host community. This was to add depth to the data collected, increase the validity of the findings (Guion et al., 2011) and widen the researcher's understanding (Olsen, 2004), which may be limited by a single data collection method. Without this diversity of methods, certain key aspects of youth life in artisanal mining communities would not be highlighted.

[12] A detailed explanation of the selection of the study areas is discussed in section 4.3 of this chapter.

Table 4.1: Summary of Questions, Data Needs, Sources of Data, Methods of Data Collection and Location of Data Collection

Main Research Questions:

1. How was the decision to migrate to undertake gold mining arrived at?
2. How were the relationships among migrant youth, other miners and other members of the host community?
3. What were the relevant issues that generated conflicts (socioeconomic and cultural issues) between youth migrants and the host community?
4. What was the potential for peace between migrants and members of the host community?

Data Needs	**Sources of Data**	**Methods of Data Collection**	**Location of Data Collection**
Information on the key/main participants of the study: definition, age, sex, education and other demographic details relevant to the study Factors influencing youth to migrate to undertake galamsey; the source of information that determined the choice of destination (particular community, district and region) Information on how they were recruited into the various mining camps when they first arrived; the various roles they undertook; did they perceive that their actions had any impact on the community?	Youth (migrant); library and online search engines	Informal discussions; semi-structured interviews; life histories; focus group discussions; observation; archival research – reports, government records, newspapers, articles, journals and books; photo diaries (pictorial accounts of daily life)	Bath, UK; Accra and Koforidua; the various mining communities in the Birim North district in Ghana (communities were selected during the consultation and pilot phase)
Information on the relationship between the youth migrants and other members of their mining camps, including those from the community What was their relationship with the community, and how did they engage with the community?	Youth (migrant); key state actors including chiefs and opinion leaders of the communities etc.	Informal discussions; semi-structured interviews; focus group discussions; key informants; relevant archival literature.	Accra; mining communities in the Birim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana

Did they partake in the traditional and cultural practices of the host? Did they perceive discrimination from the host population? Were they aware of any ascriptions or labels given to immigrants?			
Information on the relevant issues that generated conflicts How were the conflicts manifested? Did conflict lead to a coalition of forces against the conflicting groups? How did conflict impact on their daily activities? How did they defend themselves against aggression from the community? Were there external factors which were built into these conflicts (besides local-migrant relations)? Information on how these conflicts were resolved: using state, traditional (chieftaincy institution) or in camp resolution/approaches Were the measures successful or were there still elements of conflict? Should the strategies be commended or new solutions found? What were the prospects for peace/what measures did they think could be put in place to bring about peace? (Information on new opportunities for turning	Youth (migrants); district assemblies and unit committee members; mining associations; youth groups; chiefs and opinion leaders; owners of pits; Ghana Chamber of Mines; advocacy groups; library and online search engines	Semi-structured interviews; focus group discussions; informal discussions with other key state and non-state actors; relevant reports; records, articles and journals etc.	Mining communities in the Birim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana

conflicts into avenues for peace)			
Information on who had the right to mine for gold: did they think they had the same rights as the host population? Did they think that the host population perceived them as taking what was rightfully theirs?	Youth (migrants); mining associations (ASM)	Semi-structured interviews; focus group discussions; personal communication	Mining communities in the Birim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana
Issues surrounding land acquisition. Who lets land for ASM operations? The interplay between traditional authority and the government over land vending	Chiefs; opinion leaders; government officials; pit owners; mining associations	Informal discussions/personal communication	Mining communities in the Birim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana
Information on why mining had been a factor of social conflict – historical and contemporary, regional and national context Information on intergroup conflicts between migrants and the indigenous population in general and in the mining sector	Library; various government archival depository institutions	Desk review: archival Research – reports; government records; newspapers; articles, journals and books	Bath, UK; Accra and Koforidua, the various mining communities in the Birim North District in Ghana
Information on whether the discovery of gold and the resultant/sudden influx of migrants had affected the community, including its effects on the structures of the community (schools, health posts etc.); any adverse socio-cultural and economic changes	Officials of the various District Assemblies and unit committees; chiefs and traditional authority leaders; heads of local institutions etc.	Key Informants – personal communication; reports	Mining communities in the Birim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana
The role of key state and non-state actors within the ASM sector (their	District Assemblies and unit committee members; chiefs	Key informants: personal communication/interviews; reports	Mining communities in the Birim North District in the

programmes) Information on whether their programmes were tailored towards mitigating or managing conflicts, including those that target young people.	and opinion leaders; pit owners; Ghana Chamber of Mines; advocacy groups, etc.		Eastern Region of Ghana
Given the experiences and exposure to conflicts and risk, would they have chosen a different career?	Youth (migrants)	Semi-structured interviews; focus group discussions	Mining communities in the Birim North District in the Eastern Region of Ghana
Others: information on study area and literature review	Library	Desk Review: archival research – reports; government records; newspapers; Articles; journals and books	Bath, UK; Accra and the Eastern Region of Ghana

4.2.3 Data Collection Instrument/Methods

The research sought an in-depth understanding of the relationship between youth, migration and conflict, and I used several instruments of data collection to achieve this. In selecting a data collection method, I considered how the youth would relate to it and also its flexibility and reliability in adequately capturing their personal experiences and perceptions within the ASM environment. The study was undertaken at the community level but contextualised with secondary information from the district, regional and national levels to address the characterisation of ASM in the country. It consisted of desk study and primary data collection. The desk study consisted of a literature review of existing reports and works – i.e. previous studies relating to the subject matter at the community, district, regional and national levels in other African countries and elsewhere in the world.

The first stage of the primary data collection process was the consultation phase. This involved a reconnaissance of the study area, with the objective of becoming acquainted with it and obtaining relevant information from a range of stakeholders to place the study in context. Consultations took place with officials of the District Assembly and civil society, academics from the University of Cape Coast, opinion leaders (chiefs, community heads, youth leaders, ASM leaders, etc.); they were informed of the details of the research, its significance, how we intended to carry out the study and our contact details.

After the various consultation processes were completed, transect walks were taken in the study sites to build rapport with local communities. I appointed a local guide who was familiar with the area and with the various artisanal mining sites in the communities. This stage of the data collection process

was not taken for granted; it enabled the researcher to gather valuable information not found in books. It also served as an 'icebreaker', considering the volatile, risky and contested terrain an illegal mining site could be. In addition, familiarisation with the research area, the sites and the people helped shape, refine and enrich the research questions, which were not static. Using a local guide also solved the problem of identifying who was a migrant and who was a local. However, access to communities was negotiated with traditional chiefs of the area and galamsey leaders at the sites.

Below are the various methods of data collection used in the study. The methods are discussed in chronological order as used, though in most cases they overlapped. The study principally used semi-structured interviews and observations since these were mutually reinforcing qualitative techniques that compensate for each other's shortfalls and at the same time served as a bridge to understanding people-oriented inquiry (Patton, 1990). The adoption of this format follows Woods (1988), who found that the use of a principal method supported by other methods helped support explanations of the subject-choice process he was developing.

4.2.3.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the key target (youth migrants) about their experiences, opinions, thoughts, feelings and knowledge. While Bryman (2001) suggested the use of unstructured interviews, Hancock (2002) advocated semi-structured interviews, which allowed the interviewer to probe the interviewee to elaborate on an earlier line of inquiry and to limit rambling that might divert the session. Also, semi-structured interviews limited the influence of an outsider with predetermined notions and answers, by allowing the participants to speak for themselves. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed for inferences or 'leads' (Bryman, 2001) drawn from observation or secondary data sources to be corroborated, and also the inclusion of relevant data that observation could not capture.

An interview schedule was developed as a generic guide. This included, but was not limited to, the following questions:

- What criteria influenced the decision to migrate for gold mining?
- What was a typical working day like for them, and what activities did they undertake?
- How were they regarded and treated by the indigenous population, real or perceived?
- With the high exposure to risk and antagonism, why did they choose gold mining?

At the beginning of the interview, the purpose and intent of the research was made known to the participants, their informed consent was obtained and they were assured of confidentiality. With the study's main target as migrant youth small-scale gold miners, as elucidated in the Chapter Two, three categories of youth were initially distinguished: those in school (15 – 19 years); those out of school (15 – 19 years, including those who had left school or had never been to school); and those post-school (20 – 35 years, also including those who had never been to school). A youth/age-

related/educated categorisation was chosen for its practical convenience and conceptual soundness. It was to allow an in-depth perspective from a 'younger' and 'older' group of youth, and allowed for rigour, since salient characteristics of youth were represented (Chant and Jones, 2005; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003), especially with regards to their employment aspirations and how each confronted and managed risk and conflicts as miners. However, after entering the field, I learned that youth who were still in school were not allowed at the mining sites, making the interviewing of 15 – 19 year olds impossible. Consequently, and true to the flexible nature of a qualitative methodology, I reduced the categories to two: those between 19 and 25 years and those from 26 to 35. Also, to get a fair representation of both categories as well as between male and female participants, the views of young females were sought. Artisanal mining has been associated with men, with young women's roles often being relegated; seeking a broad spectrum of understanding, this study included the experiences of a diverse youth population, thereby addressing the homogenising and arbitrary representation of youth within ASM communities.

The issue of what constitutes an ideal sample size in qualitative research has been contested. Guest et al. (2006: 1) posited that while the idea of saturation was helpful conceptually, "it provides little guidance for estimating sample sizes for robust research prior to data collection". After a critical search of various literature, Mason (2010) made some estimates, with the minimum acceptable sample size for all qualitative research set at fifteen, but with no clear upper limit. However, most qualitative researchers' experiences indicated that after interviewing twenty or so people, nothing new comes out of the transcripts (Thorogood, 2009: c.f. Mason, 2010). To provide an in-depth study, the sample size for the main target was 51. 29 indigenous youth miners and 20 adults in the selected communities were also interviewed (see section 4.5).

4.2.3.2 Observation

The use of observation allowed the researcher to see in a credible and reliable way how people actually behaved, since during interviewing, people may behave in ways which may not reflect what they actually did. Observation was also used to cross-check information provided during interviewing or focus group discussions. According to Law et al. (1998: 4), observation was perhaps the best method of inquiry "when the situation or issue of interest was obscured or hidden from public knowledge", such that meanings and interpretations could be made about research participants by observing the activities and interactions in situ.

In their study of youth with special emphasis on street children, Turnbull et al. (2009) found that the subjects had mastered the art of replying to questions posed during data collection, tactfully refusing to respond, responding to please the researcher or blatantly lying for the pleasure of it. However, observation was employed in this study to provide consistency and to iron out discrepancies that may arise during interviewing. As Patton (1990) stated, it permits the researcher a detailed and better

understanding of the situation being studied. Also, based on the experiences of other researchers on youth, there was no attempt to force the subjects to participate, which helped establish trust between the participants and the researcher. Observations involved detailed descriptions of the young miners' activities, behaviours, actions and interpersonal interactions. Also, an observation of the environment, including the various ASM sites and the local community, was undertaken to provide valuable background information. Information was sought on the key features and services of the area, for example, geographical descriptions, health centres, schools, civic centres etc.

Observational data included written description (field notes), photographs and video recordings. However, the filming was minimal to avoid affecting participants' behaviour. According to Walls (2011: 850), the researcher should include personal information in his field notes, detailing his/her feelings, "contributing elements of self-reflection, memories, and other impressions that can be shared with the reader". Citing Mruck and Breuer (2003: 3) Walls opined that this genuinely contributed to transparency and credibility of outcomes and revealed why certain choices and decisions were made as the research progresses.

4.2.3.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Unlike other methods of inquiry such as questionnaires and observation, which elicited information on an individual basis and were generally aimed at individual experiences, a focus group discussion (FGD), as Gibbs (2007: 2) noted, obtained information within a group setting, drawing on "respondents' attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reaction through group interaction". This was appropriate for this study as it gathered evidence on what groups of people think, how consensus was arrived at and how groups interacted with others. An added advantage was that large amounts of data could be gathered in a short period compared to other modes of data collection. The use of FGDs in this study, as Morgan (1988) noted, was to provide added depth to the researcher's understanding of migrant youth experiences and activities, as well as to supplement data gathered from a blend of observation and interviewing.

In this study, FGDs were undertaken after individual interviews had taken place, by which time the researcher was tolerated by the young miners, and they were carried out at the various mining sites for the migrants and in the community for indigenes. Seven FGDs sessions were held with the main stakeholders (with one session for females)[13], lasting between 45 minutes and one hour depending on how responsive and uninhibited the dialogue was. Burgess (1996) combined focus groups and participant-observation to explore the social and cultural bases of risk and fear in recreational woodlands in Greenwich. However, she noted that while she had conducted successful mixed-gender focus groups in previous studies, topics were more openly discussed in single-gender and ethnically diverse groups. In this study, interactive single-gendered and indigene/migrant focus groups allowed

[13] See Conducting Actual Field Operations in a later section of this chapter.

for a congenial and amenable environment where the participants were able to interact and share ideas, views and experiences.

The focus groups typically consisted of no more than seven persons, though according to Litosseliti (2003) the group could consist of between four and twelve persons depending on the research purpose. However, he noted that small groups enabled the exploration of complex and controversial topics and encourage detailed accounts, which were important to this study. The FGD sessions involved the researcher as moderator and a research assistant as recorder. Powell and Single (1996) suggested about five or six open-ended questions, with follow-up probes to allow for a lively discussion sequenced from less sensitive to more sensitive questions.

Five sequential questioning routes, listed by Rennekamp and Nall (2003: 4) as a framework in FGDs, were followed:

- Opening questions: generally, the opening dialogue is essential to easing tensions, relaxing participants and getting them talking, e.g. asking the participants their names and how long they had been mining.
- Introductory questions: dialogue to get the participants to think about the topic, e.g. why did they choose mining, and did they consider the risks involved?
- Transition questions: more in-depth questions, generally more detailed than the introductory questions, e.g. asking the participants for their impressions about mining.
- Key questions: focused on the specific issues and aims of the study, e.g. perception of discrimination, the positive and negative aspects of galamsey, how they handled risk, and how conflicts emerged and how they managed them?
- Ending questions: general matters, after which the session is brought to a close, e.g. questions related to how mining has changed their lives, how long they intended to remain as miners and whether they would return to their communities after mining.

These group sessions involved people who knew each other, but not intimately, so questions involving the disclosure of personal and sensitive information were limited to individual interviews. Also, bearing in mind that ASM settings were contested terrains, the participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and their identity protected. This approach allowed the youth to express more freely their view of the world, of mining, of the contending issues and of their challenges. It also provided the space to ask each other questions and confirm the views expressed by others. At the end of each group session, a debriefing took place to discuss how the session went, how individuals responded, the themes and topics that came up (or did not come up), and our initial ideas about the significance of particular issues (Burgess, 1996). A draft of a transcript was produced immediately after the session and further corrected for analysis.

4.2.3.4 In-depth Interview

In addition to the above methods, an in-depth interview was conducted in a bid to reconstruct the life of a key research participant. This involved asking the person to reflect at length about his life and the changes and processes which underpinned his experiences as a galamsey operative (Bryman, 2001).

4.3 Selection and Location of Study Area and Research Participants

The selection of the study area and research participants was an important aspect of this thesis. As the theoretical framework and methods applied in this research employed neither experimental nor quasi-experimental design, research area and participants were not selected randomly. Selection was based on characteristics and attributes which made the area and participants suitable for the study. The choice of the Eastern Region, followed by the choice of the Birim North District and the three communities; Noyem, Nyafoman and Akoase, and the subsequent rejection of other well-known galamsey areas were carefully considered.

There is no doubt that there are several areas in Ghana, where galamsey is practised and some areas have had the activity going on for several decades. However, the selection of the study area was principally based on an area which had recently witnessed intense galamsey activity due to the recent siting of a large-scale mining company and which had resulted in the inundation of migrants into the area. According to Hilson (2001), gold deposits were scattered all over Ghana due to its favourable geological position, resulting in widespread artisanal gold mining throughout the country. "Large deposits of placer gold occurred along the terraces, floodplains, channels and river beds of the Offin, Pra, Ankobra, Birim and Tano rivers", where most gold mining took place (Ibid: 5). The auriferous areas which attracted international mining companies and a hive of ASM activities include the Ashanti, the Brong Ahafo and the Western Regions.

The Eastern Region of Ghana, though had a history of gold mining, it was recently that it had come into the limelight of galamsey and had witnessed a surge of migrants, since the recent discovery of significant gold reserves, especially in the Ajenjua Bepo and Atewa Range Forest Reserves, and with the siting of new Large and Small-Scale Mining companies in the Birim North District (Anane, 2010). This study focused in detail on three communities (Nyafoman, Noyem and Akoase) which until recently were predominantly agrarian, producing crops like cocoa, palm oil, cassava etc., but which have become a hive of ASM activity.

As earlier stated, even though there were several areas where galamsey had been taking place for decades, these places were rejected, firstly, because they did not fit the criteria as stated above. Secondly, it was not possible to distinguish between conflict caused by the surge in migrants and other causes which may not be related to galamsey. Areas in the Western and Ashanti Regions such as Tarkwa, Obuasi and Prestea have had a long history of galamsey activities and may have encountered conflicts longer than other emerging mining communities. Indeed, the often-cited conflict in these

areas involved land-use conflicts between small-scale miners and large-scale mining companies. Grant et al. (2011) found that land-use conflicts were prevalent between large-scale mining companies and artisanal miners and this had persisted for several years. This was not to discount that there were not conflicts between illegal miners and the local communities, but the consideration was that overtime the dynamics and incidence of conflict may have changed and included other aspects that may or may not be host-migrant related. This study aimed to analyse the triggers of conflict which were galamsey related, but most importantly due to the surge in migration. Only a study of an area that had recently been exposed to galamsey and had witnessed an inundation of migrants it was hoped, aside from bringing a fresh impetus, will generate information that was original.

The selection of the Eastern Region was based on a study carried out by Yakovleva (2007) and Banchirigah (2008) in Noyem in the Birim North District. They noted that since 2003, with the granting of a concession to the Newmont Gold Mining Company in New Abirem in the Birim North District, the surrounding communities had experienced a mass migration of illegal miners. These came both from within the country and from neighbouring West African countries, and recently from China and Spain. Since the commencement of Newmont in 2008, the Birim North District had witnessed an influx of migrant artisanal miners, predominantly in areas such as Nyafoman, estimated to involve more than 10,000 people (Yakovleva, 2007). Banchirigah (2008) described how the establishment of the mine by Newmont had led to a rapid population growth with an estimate of about 30,000 artisanal miners undertaking galamsey on the company's Noyem's concession; most of these migrants came from different districts and regions of the country. The sudden influx of migrants, the subsequent loss of farm lands for galamsey and the friction between the locals and migrants over the best lands for gold mining was bound to generate agitation, animosity and conflict.

Furthermore, though conflicts in the gold sector were not a recent phenomenon, they had increased in the last decade, especially in ASM, and the Eastern Region has perhaps emerged as central to the notoriety of galamsey, bringing excessive disputes and social vices (Okoh and Hilson, 2011). While little attention had been paid to the migration-conflict nexus (Grant et al., 2016), the situation in the Eastern Region had been captured in several of the country's newspapers (Times, 2009; Daily Graphic, 2013; Joy News, 2013). A feasibility study conducted by the African Queen Mines Ltd in Noyem and Nyafoman in the Birim North District noted the longstanding conflict between artisanal miners and the local community (Business Wire, 2011 and Reuters, 2011).

As noted earlier, galamsey is widespread in Ghana. However, it is a migratory activity, and as such, an ideal context for this study was one where past and present experiences could be gathered. The Eastern Region offered an appropriate setting due to the recent influx of galamsey operators from all over the country. As such, it was possible to gather respondents' experiences not only in their present location, but in other areas where they had stayed, since the majority, especially those from outside

the Eastern Region, had been involved in multiple moves from one galamsey community to the other. Another likely location was the Central Region because substantial gold deposits had recently been found there and had witnessed an influx of galamsey operators. However, it was rejected because the deposits were scattered mainly along the coast and the authorities swiftly put an end to galamsey operations. But more importantly had not witnessed the siting of any major mining firm in a decade. Other possible locations in the Eastern Region were rejected because migrants had not played a significant part in the commencement of artisanal mining. Familiarisation visits to galamsey areas, including the East Akyem Municipality, showed that the activity was dominated by locals and that migrants did not feature prominently. Logistical and time constraints also played a part, with many galamsey localities widely scattered and poorly connected to each other. While many areas offered potential advantages, it was appropriate that the study be located in an area that, aside from the significant advantages described previously, allowed for it to be conducted within its time and budgetary allocations. The Eastern Region and the district were selected to provide fresh impetus to research in intergroup relations between migrant populations and the indigenous people, particularly between young migrant 'galamsey' operators and the host population.

4.3.1 Selection of Study Communities: Profile and Location of Study Area

The Birim North District constitutes one of the 26 districts and municipalities in the Eastern Region of Ghana. In 1987, it was separated from the Birim District Council by LI 1442 as part of the government's drive to effectively promote its decentralisation efforts and enhance the development of the district. Located at the western end of the Eastern Region, the district lies within latitude 6.15˚N - 6.35˚N and longitude 0.20˚W - 1.05˚W (Nartey et al., 2011). With its administrative capital in New Abirem, the district "is bordered to the north by Kwahu West Municipal, to the south by Akyemansa District, which was taken out of the Birim North District in 2008, to the east by Atiwa District and finally to the west by the Asante Akim South District" (Ghana Districts, 2006).[14] (See Fig. 4.1)

While there are more than 25 towns and settler communities in the district, New Abirem, (in which Newmont has the largest mining company currently), Akoase, Noyem, Nyafoman and Dadiekrom are noted for galamsey and other small-scale mining companies. Communities were selected for this study through familiarisation visits to galamsey areas and consultations with a number of knowledgeable and informed people. This corroborated the findings of Banchirigah (2008) and Yakovleva (2007), who showed that areas from Akoase to Mpintimpi were inundated with galamsey activities. Time and logistical constraints impacted on the choice, as did the importance of easy access to respondents and mining sites. Noyem, Nyafoman and Akoase were selected, based on consultation with opinion leaders and a local person (the research assistant), who were familiar with the localities

[14] www.ghanadistricts.gov.gh, 2006; www.ghanadistricts.com.

where ASM was most prevalent in the region. Fig. 4.2 is a map of the Birim North District showing the selected communities.

The three communities selected were near each other on the Nkawkaw-Oda-Kade major road. Noyem, came after Akoase, but was the first community selected because it was noted as the hub of galamsey in the District. It had a market, two public standpipes, two disused public places of convenience, a public and a private school, and some shops selling machines and spare parts for mining. Other than a small clinic, the community lacked social amenities such as a police station, a post office, toilet facilities etc. Noyem had two main mining sites: one in the south of the community near the River Aprokuma or Afia (the Akan name for a girl born on Friday); and the other northeast of the community near the River Enwie or Abena (the Akan name for a girl born on Tuesday). Interestingly, the rivers had female names, indicating that they were inhabited by female goddesses/spirits. No mining took place on Tuesdays around the River Enwie, while galamsey activities were halted around the River Aprokuma on Fridays. Akoase and Nyafoman shared features with Noyem. They, too, lacked social amenities, but Akoase had a police station serving all three communities. Like Noyem, Nyafoman had a mining camp, which shared a border with Noyem, but Akoase, the biggest in terms of population, had no mining site of its own but housed some of the migrants, especially those from the North.

4.4 Conducting Actual Data Collection and Selection of Respondents

The selection of research participants was a vital component, and essentially the laborious part, of this study. Prior to the commencement of fieldwork, only youth migrants were targeted to be interviewed, but consultations with key persons and preliminary visits in the study area suggested the inclusion of various groups from the host communities. In keeping with the flexible nature of qualitative methodology, these adjustments were made, since it was essential to corroborate the perceptions of migrant miners. Despite altering the initial methodology and lengthening the process of data collection, this in no small way enriched and broadened the data collected. To facilitate this, the respondents were categorised into five groups:

1. Youth migrants (51 respondents)
2. Youth from the host communities involved in galamsey (29 respondents)
3. Indigene-turned migrants[15] (3 respondents)
4. Adult members of the host communities (20 respondents)
5. Members of the communities' galamsey committees.

Using purposive and thereafter snowballing approaches, it was challenging to find the first respondent as most of the operators were apprehensive. The ASM environment created conditions of fear and

[15] These were youth inhabitants of the host communities who during the period of fieldwork had gone to other neighbouring communities to undertake galamsey. Usually, these are advance parties sent by their gangs to scout for new discoveries. Interviewing this group provided the opportunity to learn how they felt as migrants, and about their experiences with their host community.

lack of trust, and there were security and confidentiality issues: in fact, mining communities in the District had previously witnessed a swoop by security forces which had resulted in the maiming and incarceration of suspected operators. Initial approaches to participants, a crucial part of this study, therefore required sensitivity. However, due to the relatively small sizes of the communities, people knew each other and what went on. The chief's linguist of Noyem, who was also the head of the community's galamsey committee, was the first to be interviewed. The expectation was that an important personality consenting to be interviewed would encourage a positive response from the main target group. A small concession owner whom the researcher had met during the familiarisation visit was contacted, and he provided one of his apprentices as a guide for the period of the fieldwork. Tiresome as these processes were, they served to encourage galamsey operators to participate in the study. On the first day of data collection, the apprentice, who was an indigene, became the first person to be interviewed, then he introduced various respondents both from the communities and on the mining sites. After a week on the field, one of the youth leaders in Noyem, who had many connections, was contacted. He could easily tell who was an indigene and who was a migrant, and was able to arrange visits to the other communities and the mining sites. His involvement led to a surge in confidence among potential respondents and those who were rejected were disappointed. While it was easy to interview indigenes, interviewing migrants were a challenge and had to rely on the first migrant respondent of the day to introduce other migrants. However, interviewing was restricted to just one person per gang as it was realised that during the sessions, all the members of the gang joined together in providing answers.

Before participants were included in the study, they were made aware of its purpose and assured of confidentiality and anonymity, especially assuring them that the study was not government-sponsored and as such would not be reported to the government, and that they would not be identified when the research was written up. They were also given guidance on expected time commitments and assured of their right to decline. Informed consent was secured from participants, ghetto owners and gang leaders. While the agreement of the latter did not replace the consent of the participants, it facilitated a more supportive environment which allowed the freedom to participate. Interviews were conducted with 51 youth migrants, made up of 20, 17 and 14 respondents living in Noyem, Nyafoman and Akoase respectively[16]. 29 interviews were conducted among indigenous youth, comprising 14, 9 and 6 respondents from Noyem, Nyafoman and Akoase respectively. The concentration of the respondents was based on the intensity of galamsey operations in the three communities, where Akoase exhibited the lowest intensity of galamsey activities. In addition, 20 adults from the three communities were interviewed. Here there was no structure as to whom to interview and sifted through the participants, which included retired teachers, women vendors, landlords, machine shop owners and part sellers.

[16] See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion about youth migrants in the district.

With the people's trust secured, it was possible to arrange for those who had not been interviewed to take part in the FGDs. Mindful of group dynamics, the groups were selected based on indigene-migrant and male-female balance to allow for homogeneity as well as to encourage effective discussion and interaction among the participants. The focus groups for migrants were held at the mining sites, while those for indigenes took place in the communities, in order to allow the respondents to interact freely in a comfortable environment. However, it was realised during each session that a couple of the participants assumed the role of spokesperson for the group. Despite encouraging others in the group to enthusiastically join in the discussions, most of the time they consented to views expressed by the spokespersons and contributed only when prompted. This was most noted during the FGD for migrant women. 7 FGDs were undertaken, including:

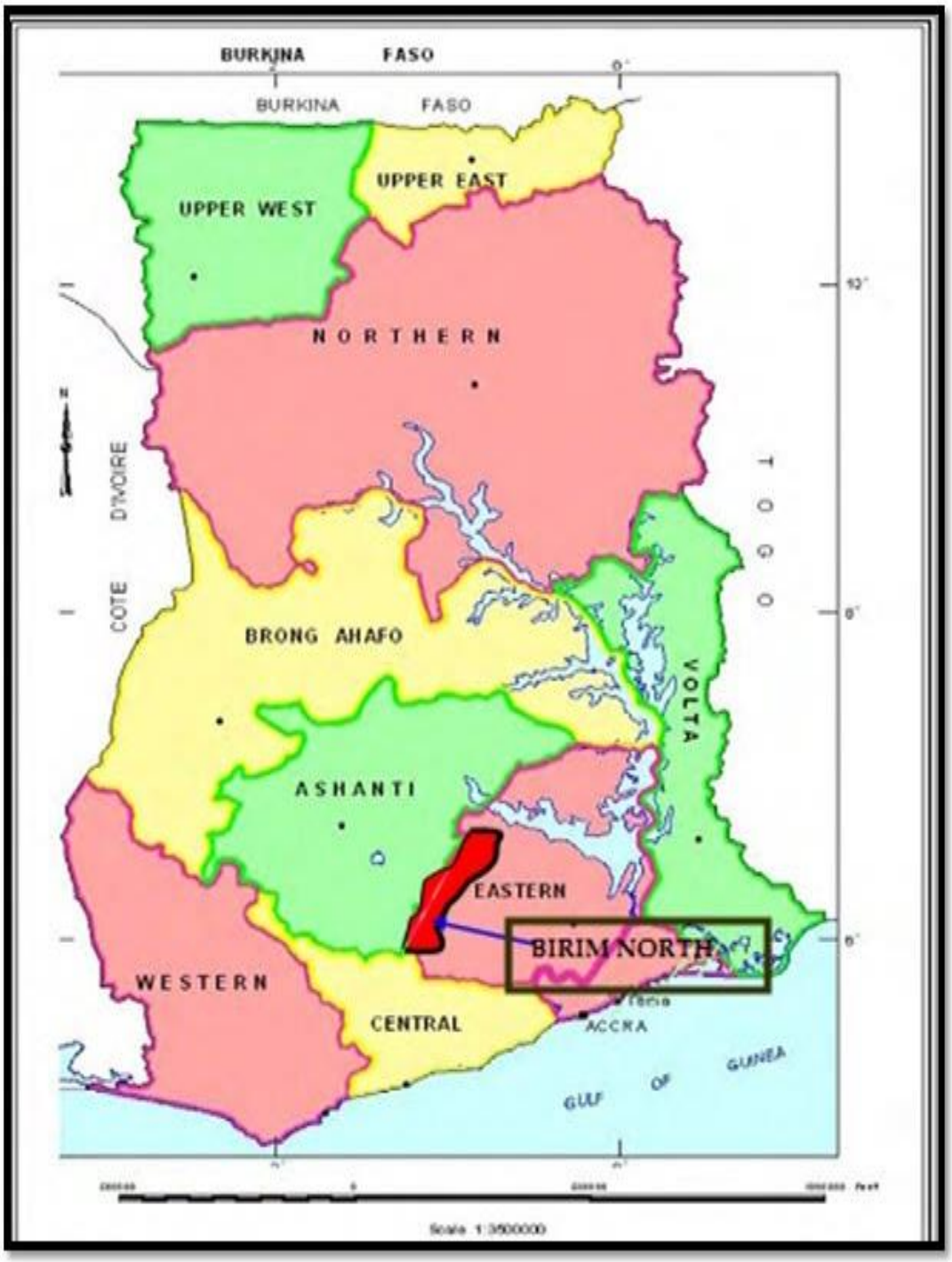
1. 2 for migrant youth miners (Noyem and Akoase)
2. 2 for indigenous youth miners (Noyem and Nyafoman)
3. 1 for migrant women[17]
4. 1 for indigenes-turned migrants
5. 1 for members of galamsey/unit committee (Noyem)

4.5 Replicating the Findings

The outcome of this thesis was devoted entirely to the context of galamsey communities in the Birim North District and no attempt had been made to generalise the findings. Indeed, the conventional view about using a case study approach was that they "cannot be of value in and of themselves" and that they had to be linked to further statistical research (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 221). However, as noted by Gomm et al. (2000) the adoption of a case study presented a working hypothesis which could be applied to other cases which fit or were close enough. In this thesis, since the case was location specific, it could be appropriately applied to other regions if only they met the context: that was the location was a hot spot for galamsey due to a recent siting of a large-scale mining company which had triggered many people migrating into the area. While areas like Tarkwa, Prestea, Bogoso and Obuasi may have had long associations with galamsey, the nuances might be different as stated earlier. Generalising the study within these jurisdictions may not be entirely justified, and will need a critical approach to isolate conflicts which may not be related to host-migrant relations.

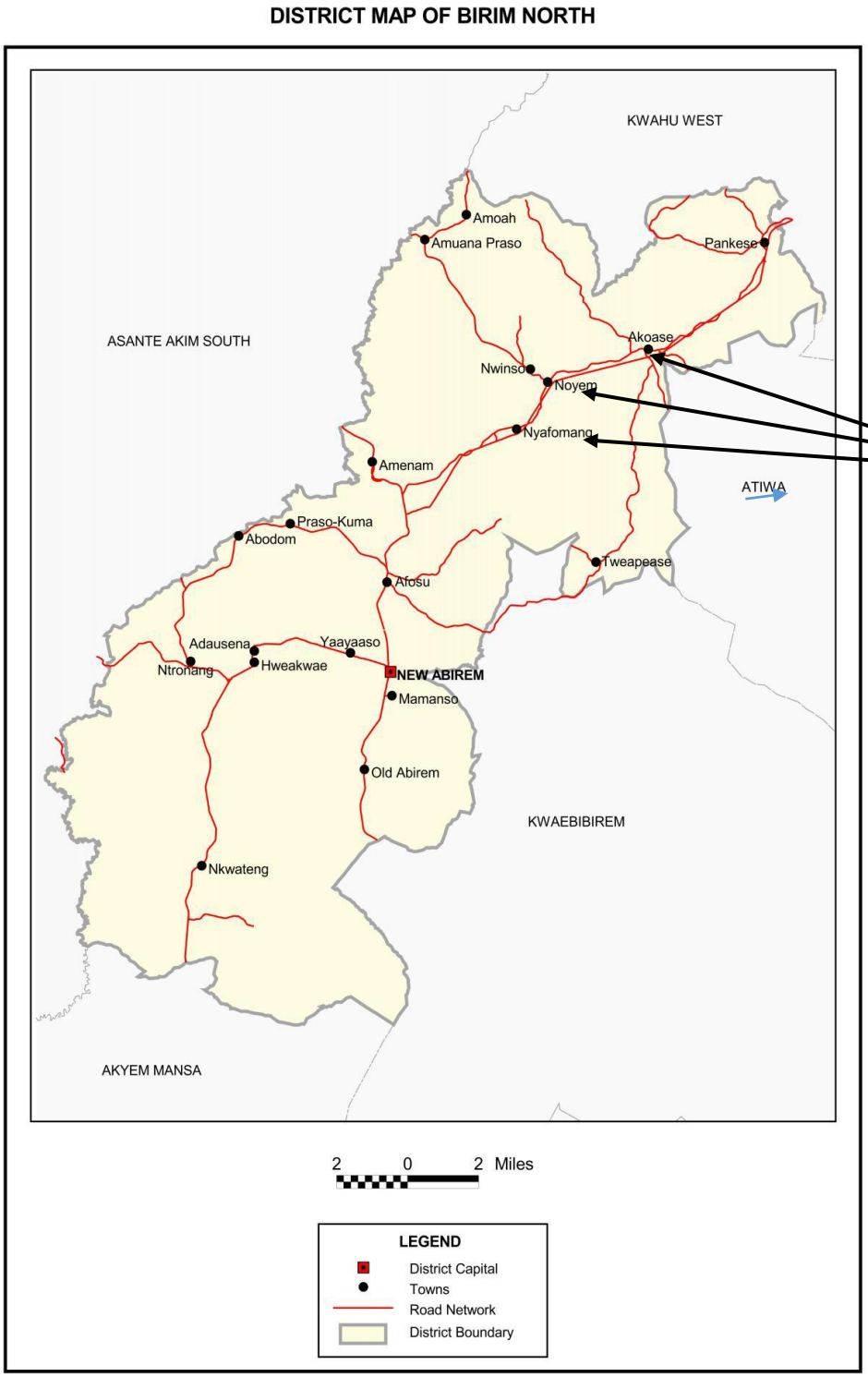
[17] FGD was conducted only for migrant women because at the time of fieldwork, they were the only ones actively involved in the chain of galamsey activities (see P.94). Though only a few indigenous women were observed, it is believed that over time their numbers will increase and create a potential conflict situation between the two groups.

Figure 4.1 Map of Ghana showing the Birim North District



Source: www.digitalartifactfrederick/frederickappiahkusi.com

Fig 4.2 Map of Birim North District, showing the selected communities



Source: GSS, 2010 Population and Housing Census

4.6 Duration of Fieldwork

Field operations began at the end of June 2014, commencing with consultations, while actual data collection took place between July 2014 and January 2015. It was important to schedule fieldwork during the dry season[18], when artisanal mining activities predominantly took place (see Maconachie et al., 2007). Also, it was expected that there would be an influx of seasonal artisanal miners. However, conversational interviews with the artisanal miners revealed that the seasons had no effect on migration patterns. While migration flows were steady, accounting for a four percent annual increase in population in the district, it was new discoveries or prospective strikes that led to an influx of migrants. Indeed, since 2003, after the granting of a concession to Newmont, the district had witnessed a steady inflow of galamsey workers, particularly in Noyem and Nyafoman, estimated to involve close to 10,000 people migrating from various localities in the country and from neighbouring countries. A survey found that the majority of migrants were males between the ages of 21 and 48, constituting about 76 percent of those who moved into the district (BDNA, 2010).

4.7 Data Analysis

Data collected was transcribed and coding was done using a computer-based analysis programme (NVivo). After coding, the data was sorted into themes which aided the overall data analysis. However, whether one chooses to use a computer programme or not, the definition and categorization of themes were the responsibility of the researcher. As Bryman (2004) noted, decisions about coding textual materials and interpretation of findings rest with the researcher and not with the computer programme.

4.8 Reflection on the Research Process

4.8.1 Ethical Issues

In recent years, developing countries have increasingly become the focus of social science research, and this has raised the concern of ethics, especially because these are societies of some of the world's least powerful, poorest and most vulnerable populations. It is the policy of most universities for a researcher to seek ethical clearance involving humans, and this also makes the research process and the findings "trustworthy and valid" (Biber, 2005).

Youth as a category had been formulated based on 'adultist' epistemological assumptions and methodological viewpoints of who the youth were (Morrow, 2009). However, in this study these standpoints were abandoned and young people were seen as social actors in their own right. This did not mean overlooking ethical considerations. Helve (2005) argued that while ethical issues were important in all youth research, they were more essential to a qualitative approach. With a flexible and less exacting structure, and without an ethical guide, the researcher may include questions that

[18] The major rainfall season occurs "from late March to early July", while the minor season takes place "from mid-August to late October". There are two dry seasons, the first, a short one, in July, and a longer one from November to March. (BNDA, 2010:8).

encroached on sensitive and intimate areas inappropriate for young people. Over the years, researchers working with young people have adopted innovative methodologies that were non-exploitative and that even out any power differentials between the researcher and the researched. Though several these approaches had been criticised for pushing the boundaries of qualitative research, consideration had been given to methodological approaches that were practical, relevant and ethically and morally responsible (Robinson and Gillies, 2012).

Though many social and cultural phenomena were regarded as sensitive, Li (2008: 102) considered "sensitive research" to be "the study of secretive, stigmatised, or deviant human activity and behaviour involving vulnerable research subjects". In this research, because of the illegal nature of artisanal mining, fieldwork was carried out in a way that did not endanger participants. Since data collection was carried out in an environment where people were suspicious of strangers lest they were from the government's task force, a local guide was employed. His presence minimised the fear of the location and activities of respondents being disclosed to the authorities. Similarly, some symbolic tokens such as an ID card from the university were shown to the participants to assure them that this research was purely academic and not meant for any purpose which might arouse fear and withdrawal.

The British Educational Research Association Ethical Guidelines to strengthen the bond between the researcher and the researched served as a guide, so as not to damage the future enquires of other researchers and to enhance the image of research in general. The ethical considerations for this research are evident in the methods used in the collection of data, including full disclosure of the purpose of the research, the consent of all participants, the assurance that participation was voluntary, and anonymity. While this is not an exhaustive list, it follows the guidelines used in all of the methods of data collection (Homan, 1991).

The use of qualitative research for this study embraced ethical standards: participants were not distanced from the study, but rather were involved in the data collection process; this built rapport and credibility. With this approach, the research site and participants were not disturbed any more than was necessary (Creswell, 2003).

4.8.2 Role of the Researcher

As previously noted, qualitative case studies occur in natural settings, enabling the researcher to develop a close affinity with the participants and with the study area. This study was no different: and most importantly the role of the researcher was critical for successful data collection. Indeed, the success of the research depended on the researcher interacting, observing and collaborating with the participants and gathering data. A concern raised by Maykut & Morehouse (1994, c.f. Dwyer and Buckle (2009: 1), was that:

> …the qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others—to indwell—and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand.

During the fieldwork, the deliberation centred upon what was germane that might impact upon the process and the participants. Greenbank (2003: 798-9) discussed the importance of the researcher clearly stating their reflexive approach. He argued that research cannot be value-free and that the researcher should acknowledge and include his/her reflexive accounts. This was significant as it highlighted "the complex relationship between the processes of knowledge production and the various contexts of such processes, as well as the involvement of the knowledge producer" (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000: 5). It was therefore essential that any motives, feelings and experiences were acknowledged (Jones, 2001).

Furthermore, in recent times the issue of positionality has become a concern in academic literature. It has been argued that the researcher should critically reflect upon what he is doing and how and why he is doing it, as well as thinking about who he is (Hopkins, 2007). As a qualitative researcher, it was essential to reflect on issues of positionality in the engagement with participants and in the overall research process. According to Monifa (2011), positionality revealed how one interpreted the social world, and more importantly:

> …means that aspects of our identity, for example, race, class, our age ... were markers of relational positions rather than essential qualities. Their effects and implications … however… change according to context (Banks, 2008: 148).

According to Lucas (2005) a researcher's perspective, beliefs about research, questions asked and preferred methodologies were dependent on previous knowledge, experience and environment. Similarly, any position adopted for this study was invariably a reflection of the influences that had shaped my experiences and understanding. As Lucas (2005) reiterated, bias was self-inflicted; the aim was to control this bias so that data did not corrupt or validate personal biases.

The dilemma was, therefore, which position to adopt for this study: that of 'insider' or 'outsider'. As Ganga and Scott (2006: 2) noted, an insider researcher shared "similar cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national and religious heritage" with the participants. While undoubtedly sharing similar characteristics with the people of the study area, and possibly with the main participants of the study (youth migrants), and could consider myself an insider, my orientation (educational and professional experiences) and background were far removed from them and set me as an outsider (see notes on Research Challenges).

However, the key to value-free insider research that enhanced the overall quality of the research process was an open-ended approach which accommodated "elements of unpredictability, individuality and subjectivity, including the researcher's biographical data, experiences and biases"

(Jones, 2001: 1). A cautionary note from Martiniello (1997: 6, c.f. Ganga and Scott, 2006) was relevant to this study; he asserted that:

> During data collection, for example, an ethnic background can be very helpful. Ethnic researchers could have privileged relations with immigrant groups, which could facilitate access to the field. Similar advantages arose from familiarity with the languages and the physical space of the researched group. On the other hand, such closeness between a researcher and his/her subject could also harm the research process.

The participants' perception was another critical element which could influenced their point of view and disposition towards the researcher, affecting, but greatly enhancing, the overall quality and the amount of data gathered. Layder (1993) observed that the key was to gain the trust of the study group by becoming a member of the group and removing any 'professional role' as a researcher. In adopting this stance, it was expected that the participants would reciprocate; England (1994) stated that the researcher-researched relationship may be reciprocal, asymmetrical or potentially exploitative, depending on the deportment of the researcher. As noted earlier, the research process could not be delineated from the personality of the researcher, and this invariably affected the process. Controlling such biases was certainly key to conducting a value-free data collection process, and a reciprocal relationship was sought based on empathy and mutual respect as well as on sharing knowledge with the participants (England, 1994).

4.8.3 Engagement of a Research Assistant

Owing to limited time and resources, a research assistant was hired to help in the fieldwork. To minimise time and effort in training, a research associate from the Institute of Development Studies, University of Cape Coast was employed. He had a prior background in rural development and competence in data collection procedures, and was conversant with the local dialect (Akan) of the study area. While this was costly, his expertise enhanced the quality of the data collected and added useful criticisms to the process. In addition, the services of two local guides were engaged.

The research assistant helped with the entire data collection process, beginning with the initial consultations with stakeholders and opinion leaders. In addition to interviewing, he played a vital role in the observations and focus group discussion phase. Firstly, he participated in the observation of the research participants' daily interactions and assisted in recording the discussions. Secondly, he provided a wider spectrum of the observational process and filled in details that escaped my attention, thus providing an in-depth perspective.

Moreover, the research assistant helped with the end of schedule debriefing after a session in the field, including reflections of the activities undertaken, how the session progressed, what points were salient, what was missed and what should be included in the next session.

4.8.4 Research Challenges

This research included various participants from different backgrounds and contexts: migrant and indigenous youth miners; an officer of the District Assembly; the chiefs and leaders of the communities; civil society groups including youth associations and mining associations; and the police. In recognition of the range of informants, various data collection methods were adopted, as detailed earlier. These methods were intended to capture the normal day-to-day activities of the informants (youth in ASM) without interfering with the flow of events. This proved particularly challenging. In youth research, one-to-one interviews and questionnaires might be inappropriate due to power imbalances between the researcher and young people in terms of age and social and political position; such power inequalities might be 'adultist' and intimidating, and may demand the use of participant observation and group interviews (Langevang, 2007). However, since no single method had been found suitable to capture the complexities of youth research, the study adopted a multi-method approach, using different methods to complement each other. Moreover, the wider question that surfaced was how representative and comprehensive the data collected would be. A multi-method approach to collecting data and cross-checking was adopted to help address the problem. As Ellis and MacGaffey (1996) showed, data collected by one method could be corroborated by another, and gaps could be filled accordingly.

Furthermore, although reflexivity was critical, strict and transparent reflexivity was difficult in my unenviable position as an insider-outsider, a native of the study area but one who lived in another jurisdiction. The major challenge was to carry out the research objectively, with no inherent biases. This research and subsequent fieldwork were started with a view to being an insider. Very much aware that an insider-outsider status would have a significant impact on the research, the intention upon entering the first community, Noyem, was to blend in and be one of the people. However, consciously dressing down did not help as the differences between the participants and researcher were obvious. There was a section of the community who were very cooperative and comfortable with an outsider role, and were willing to allow me into their lives and activities, while those who were apprehensive would not accept me in any role. They found themselves in rather a difficult position, because they could not decipher who was or was not an undercover security agent. It was thus best to be an outsider, but to gradually become accepted. A rapid in-and-out session was considered as not ideal, but rather to stay in the community as long as necessary to win them over.

A further major challenge was finding willing participants, especially after reports of a recent altercation between the miners and government's inter-ministerial task force. The hoped was that no action would be taken during the period of data collection, as a suspicion of the taskforce's presence would send ASM operators underground. This was beyond my control and actually made them wary of outsiders. There were also the ethical implications to consider, where the tendency was to adopt an 'end justifies the means' approach considering the potential benefits of the research. To cure this, it

was, therefore, critical to state the status of the research while trying not to violate the rights and privacy of the informants. To find willing participants, a week was spent walking with my local guide through the community, greeting everyone who was pointed out as influential in galamsey. After a week of lingering, especially around the taxi stations and markets and making myself known to the miners, even the uncooperative ones opened up and were interviewed. However, the interviews lasted barely 30 minutes, ostensibly because they did not want their gang to see them talking to me.

One of the major problems associated with social surveys was that the respondents, especially rural people, "react according to the expectation of the researcher" (Kumekpor, 2002: 258), such that they gave information that was often overrated or to please the researcher. However, in this research the respondents, especially the host, understated issues related to conflict with artisanal migrant miners. This was justifiable, because they did not want to portray their communities negatively to the outside world. Though, most social researchers continue to underestimate the intelligence of rural people; it was clear to me that these respondents knew that anyone coming from abroad with an interest in their resources could generate the potential for investment. Thus, as well as being overly open, they downplayed the incidence of conflict and laid most of the blame on migrants. To overcome this and using an advantage of qualitative methods, follow up questions, similar but framed them differently, were asked for clarification. For instance, when questioned whether they had conflicts with migrants, they would answer in the negative. But after listing some galamsey-related conflicts and asking if some of them had been precipitated on host-migrant antagonism, they responded in the affirmative.

A further challenge was the dynamism of the mining population; the miners were in constant flux, moving in and out. There was no doubt that news of a new gold strike during the course of the research could put it in jeopardy, since mining strikes were often distant and could be out of the study area. This was beyond the researcher's control. Two gold strikes were reported during the period of the fieldwork, with one in a community in the neighbouring East Akyem Municipality. Thus, to concretise the methodology and have a sound analysis, some of the miners from Noyem and Nyafoman who had been interviewed earlier were followed. This group included my second guide, who decided to relocate temporarily to Agyapoma to try their luck. Mining in Agyapoma was essentially an extension of mining in Noyem and its surrounding communities, with most of the miners from the Birim North District. They introduced underground mining and the rules that pertained there, despite the fact that surface mining was predominant in neighbouring communities in the municipality. Thus, aside from a few of the miners who relocated to the two areas of the gold strike, most remained, easing the potential anxiety of further altering the research process.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodological foundation of this study. The study is placed within the constructivist and actor-oriented approaches to the social world. It recognises that instead of the

researcher deriving reality, credit is given to the research participants, who construct their own reality through their perceptions and experiences. Youth are placed as the focal point of this study, and they give meanings and interpretations of their everyday operations and experiences. These approaches allow for flexibility and for unforeseeable outcomes to be adequately handled. This places the study within the scope of qualitative research which, aside from being rigorous, allows for flexibility and permits an in-depth discussion of the perception of youth artisanal miners within the context of host-migrant relationships. It also accommodates the collection of data which are not measurable, such as experiences and perceptions, and under problematic conditions.

As the best way to understand youth perception of host-migrant relations and conflict, semi-structured interviews, observations and FGDs were selected as the main methods of data collection. Also, an in-depth interview was used to supplement the main methods. Youth were chosen as the main research participants, and supplemented the findings with data gained from other stakeholders in galamsey and in communities. Though gold deposits can be found in many locations in Ghana, illegal mining takes place in no fewer than five out of the 10 regions in the country. However, the Eastern Region, and specifically the Birim North District, was selected as the study area. While this area is new to gold mining, its selection was expected to provide a fresh understanding of intergroup relations between host and migrant populations, since it was unknown for gold mining until a recent sudden influx of migrants. The chapter concludes with a discussion on how data was to be analysed, and with my own reflection of the research process. Here, it highlights my inherent biases and how they are overcome. The challenges that were acknowledged as critical to the study are explained, and how they are addressed. In the next chapter, an in-depth analysis of data is carried out. Specifically, it answers the first and second research questions, which discuss the context, roles and relationships within galamsey in the District.

Chapter Five

The Context, Roles and Relationships within ASM

5.0 Introduction

To many individuals and households in the Birim North District, ASM was a niche subsector which, as well as increasing purchasing power, had provided a means to an alternative livelihood and stimulated the establishment and growth of small rural businesses. This view was expressed by a majority of the respondents in the Noyem, Nyafoman and Akoase communities in the Birim North District. Here, and all over the country, there was a growing recognition of the importance of ASM, especially in communities surrounding mineral deposits. It was considered one of the primary economic activities for poverty reduction, and its impact on the country's national income was being recognised. Increasingly hard times had prompted rural households to search for alternative means of subsistence and "in the search, some had literally struck gold" (Jonsson and Bryceson, 2009: 249). ASM was considered a "direct consequence of the history and intensity of poverty in rural communities" (Debrah et al., 2014: 916).

This first empirical chapter is divided into four main sections, commencing with a detailed narrative of attempts at formalising galamsey, then a description of the ASM economy in the Birim North District, followed by a profile of the characteristics and role of the main respondents, specifically migrant youth miners. The chapter ends with an analysis of the relationship among migrant miners and between migrant miners and members of the host communities. This chapter addresses research questions 1, 2, and 3 (see pp. 4-5), using evidence from observations, informal discussions, FGDs, semi-structured interviews and relevant literature to support its arguments.

In addressing the research questions, it is important to consider the relationships between the host and migrants, and among the miners, within the context of the ASM economy. This relatively emergent economy is the setting within which relationships are forged, conflict arises and peace is brokered. It is therefore important to explore its features, including how galamsey is organised. The ASM economy in the district is characterised by an interplay between host and migrants, with the superseding authority of traditional rulers and the various mining committees. Drawing on evidence gathered from observations and personal interviews with migrant ASM operators and host communities, both miner and non-miner populations, this chapter elucidates the state and organisation of ASM in the district and shows that the migrants have been instrumental in the discovery of gold and the consequent change in the lives of the selected communities.

Arguably, a prevailing feature of galamsey in the communities has been the significant influence of migrants, who, far outnumbering the host, have introduced them to the techniques and intricacies of galamsey. These migrants are from diverse backgrounds, with various motivations for migrating. The chapter continues with an in-depth examination of the characteristics of these young miners and the

role they play in galamsey. It considers that despite the narrative of poverty as the main motivator for the proliferation of illegal artisanal mining, there are several other reasons influencing migration. Unemployment and underemployment, lack of interest in agriculture, hardship and chance (opportunity cost) are among them. Next, I argue that their choice of destination was not taken impetuously, but hinged on rational decision making, primarily based on information sourced from family and friends, the media and rumours.

The literature on migration has long focused on male youth; however, females have also joined the migration stream, and I use evidence gathered from FGD to illustrate that despite long-held gender ideologies influencing different roles within galamsey, these females play a complementary but fundamental role that supports the stability of many a mining camp.

Lastly, the chapter critically analyses relationships among the actors in the ASM sector in the district. Despite the heterogeneous context, with migrants working alongside the host and having to negotiate relationships with them, the migrant miners, organised into "gangs", largely subsist as galamsey miners due to the relationships governing their various groups. Without discounting the inherent differences that may be present among the miners within particular gangs, which often test in-group relationships and occasionally lead to disintegration and the emergence of new alliances, I argue that overall, these gangs have largely coexisted through the relationships that they forge. While it makes sense to join a gang to ease the drudgery of galamsey, I present evidence to suggest that these relationships are a function of trust, mutual respect and reciprocity. Similarly, through the gangs, I demonstrate how these young miners have engendered a sense of belonging to overcome feelings of loneliness and imposed identities as 'migrants', 'strangers' etc.

While forging and deepening relationships within the gangs, youth migrant miners find themselves in communities which may or may not exhibit the same sociocultural features as their place of origin, so they have no option but to forge new relationships with host communities. The final section will investigate the nature of the relationship between migrant and host, critically analysing how the hosts have related to migrants who have inundated their communities. I intend to demonstrate this with evidence suggesting that galamsey has persisted and that migrants have been tolerated by the communities and allowed to carry out their activities, because of factors including, but not limited to, reciprocal economic benefits. The analysis is interspersed with examples of how young miners have managed to influence the host to accept them.

5.1 Attempts at Formalising Galamsey in Ghana

The peculiarity of ASM remains till this day an enigma. In one extent, it is considered as very beneficial and important; that is not only does it create pathways to employment, but allows the citizenry "access to the nation's resource wealth... as well as... put a brake on rural-urban migration (OBG, 2014: 1). On the other extent, it is cited for its environmental damage, a risk to the mining and

surrounding communities and its people as well as initiatives in formulating new policies (Childs, 2008). Against this backdrop, every possible manoeuvre had been made to curb galamsey. These have included the confiscation and at times burning of mining equipment, incarceration of illegal miners and admonishing of community members against galamsey. However, these efforts had yielded little results and had rather seen a dramatic growth in the number of galamsey operators. The failure has shown that the use of force and fear were not the solutions to sanitising galamsey, especially, when galamsey was backed by local chiefs, some influential community members and politicians.

The solution lay not only in obtaining a licence, which was one part of the answer, but for the government to recognise and bring galamsey operators into the fold. Though Hilson and Potter (2005) argued that the decision to regularise galamsey was its potential to poverty reduction for the artisanal miners and dependents, others have stated that it was rather an economic decision by the state to mop up incomes that would have otherwise gone to illicit traders (Fearon et al., 2015). Clearly, the state was more concerned about its revenues from the small-scale mining sector than the welfare of the artisanal miners, considering that in 2001 its gold production had increased substantially and was worth over $117 million (Patel et al., 2016). The Small-Scale Mining Law, which legalised small-scale mining, also "led to the establishment of the Small-scale Mining Project within the Ghana Minerals Commission" which had the responsibility of registering small-scale miners (Amankwah and Anim-Sackey, 2003: 132). Additionally, in jurisdictions where ASM was ongoing seven regional district support centres were established, including an office in Oda to cater for small-scale miners in the Eastern Region (Hilson et al, 2007).

But, according to OBG (2014), a major challenge facing ASM operators and which had discouraged them from obtaining a licence was not the cost of the licence. Rather, it was "the accessibility to unencumbered mineable lands and the cumbersome procedures in licence acquisition" (Ibid: 1). The lack of access was not, however, due to limited mineralised lands, but the fact that the majority of these lands were concessions awarded to large-scale mining companies (Haselip, 2006). Furthermore, the tediousness of the process in obtaining a licence which required "the completion of several forms" and the set of criteria and restrictions to be adhered to, dissuaded ASM operators from seeking the requisite permits to formalise their operations. Hilson and Banchirigah (2009) emphatically placed the surge in illegal mining at the doorstep of the government. They argued that despite the substantial amount of money and support from the donor community, the "*ad hoc* policy approach" and limited targeted population rendered the actions of the government ineffective. (Ibid: 7). Hilson (2013) stated that the government had failed to put in proper and manageable procedures for galamsey operators because its focus had been to attract large-scale foreign mining companies and investments. Other authors, including Hirons (2014a) have argued that efforts at formalisation had been undermined due to the lack of understanding of the sector.

A critical but often overlooked factor that had undermined efforts to formalise galamsey was the dynamics in relation to mineralised land possession in the country. Andrews (2015: 3) talked about how "the prevailing dualism between 'statutory' and 'customary'... land ownership... complicates the issue". The 1992 constitution of the country reposed in the president the right to all lands found with mineral deposits and only the government had the power to negotiate the sale of such lands to foreign mining interest, with or without recourse to affected communities. In most cases, the sale of these lands disenfranchised the local people who depended on the lands for sustenance. Yet the majority of the lands in the country had been customarily entrusted to the traditional authorities who released these lands for farming or any other purpose. Often the traditional leaders, in contravention of the law, allocated these lands for mining purposes, because the state was mostly absent due to its remoteness. Largely, these mineralised lands fell "within lands still customarily administered by various stools, skins or families, however, though mineral resources are by law the property of the state, stool lands in mineral-endowed areas continue to be held, utilized in most cases and frequently traded" (Nyame and Blocher, 2010: 50). Therefore, "the personal and community-wide financial benefits accruing from the activity ensure [the continued] support" of the traditional leaders (Hirons, 2014a: 10).

The dilemma to the galamsey operator was the choice between the chief or the state? While the state had ultimate authority, it had rarely been present and coupled with the financial and bureaucratic nature of obtaining a licence acted as a disincentive to galamsey operators to formalise their operations. However, because the chiefs had been primarily involved in the allocation, galamsey operators preferred to negotiate the use of land with them than the state. Nyame and Blocher (2010: 50) argued that this was another type of licensing, though it was informal, but the "process was very quick, non-bureaucratic and usually done to the satisfaction both socially and economically of the parties involved; it was highly popular with both illegal artisanal miners and local community members". Hilson (2008) recounted how the chiefs of Noyem and Nyafoman, at variance to traditional practices, were actively involved in the day to day affairs of galamsey. In Noyem, the chief was the head of "Space Rock Mining" now defunct but at the time of the fieldwork, was the chief patron and head of the Noyem Small Scale Mining Company. In Nyafoman, the chief was an executive board member of the now defunct Berlin Naworo. A licensed artisanal miner would not be granted the permission to operate in the communities without recourse to and paying the requisite fees to the traditional authorities. Though, most of the artisanal miners would want to regularise their activities, but not to be doubly encumbered, would rationally resort to paying to the traditional authorities due to their dominant but current presence in the jurisdiction.

The position taken by the traditional leaders had exacerbated the entrenched illegal nature of galamsey and had "distanced government officials, policy-makers and official assistance from the sector" (Hirons, 2014a: 7). The low patronage of the formalisation process, currently estimated at 10 percent of ASM activities, had further been handicapped by the not so clear delineation of what

constituted a formal and informal operation, corruption and lack of political will on the part of public officials (Hirons, 2014b). For instance, Hilson (2008) told of how the Director of Small-Scale Mining of the Minerals Commission had proposed to relocate its Oda offices to Noyem but as at the time of the fieldwork, the plan was yet to materialise.

Reiterating the earlier statement; galamsey did not only offer opportunity for jobs, but also paved a way for the local people to have access to the nation's resource wealth. However, these were not enough to serve as an incentive for the current unparalleled growth *vis-à-vis* the risk involved in the activity. Bush (2009) argued that a more potent motivator of the activity was the unprecedented high gold price relative to other activities in the informal sector which exhibited similar characteristics to galamsey. Though, world gold price had weakened in recent times, hovering around the $1,200/Oz. Mark, it was significantly higher compared to the price of $300/Oz. in 2001-2002. This had led to a sustained rally in gold production and the increasing awareness of the benefits of the sector (Bloch and Owusu, 2011). Hilson (2002) compared prices several decades back and noted that in just three decades, there had been a five-fold increase in the price of gold. Not only had the price rise triggered an increase in gold production, but also because the miners received near-market prices due to the existence of many licensed buyers, this had led to the surge in small-scale mining.

A study by Haselip (2006) in Noyem found that a typical artisanal miner earned twice as much as the wage of an unskilled labourer. Fearon et al., (2015: 92) also revealed that the earnings of a galamsey worker in the Birim North District ranged from "$1,456-$1,950 (worst case scenario) to $7,280-$9,620 (best case scenario) annually, more than double "the average seasonal earnings of $787.5 from agriculture". The Ghana Minerals Commission was on record to have stated that the skyrocketing in gold prices had led to galamsey operators inundating mining communities, who used all kinds of implements including hoes and pickaxe. According to Fearon et al., (2015) the relative profit-nature of galamsey had been instrumental in many youth abandoning school and traditional occupations like farming to migrate into mining communities. During fieldwork, though there had been a steady fall in the price of gold, most of the respondents indicated that their earnings were substantially more than they had ever made previously. However, they were indicated that they had not only migrated due to the higher monetary gains, but, that among other things, it was principally due to the lack of jobs in their communities. Though the suggestion is that the price of gold may have triggered a lot of the citizenry going into galamsey, this had not incentivised galamsey operators to register their activities. Hilson and Potter (2003: 250) stated that this had to do with "measures[19] in place [which] had done little to facilitate improved regularization, as they had failed to address the interrelated factors causing widespread illegality in the first place".

[19] These measures have been discussed in previous paragraphs.

A way forward was for "mineable lands... to be delineated and illegal operators properly organised and brought under a responsible umbrella" (Eshun, 2005: 1). However, the dispossession of lands, limited availability of jobs for the local people and encroachment had often pitted communities and artisanal miners against these large-scale mining companies. In recent times, the large-scale mining companies which owned large concessions and the state had negotiated with traditional authorities the release of lands for small-scale mining purposes. Amankwah and Anim-Sackey (2004) acknowledged that no fewer than four large-scale mining and ASM operations coexisted in the country, on concessions held by the former, by the end of 2003. In the case of the three mining communities studied in the Birim North District, Noyem and Nyafoman had agreed with the Newmont Mining Corporation to cede part of its concession to the community, though the company had in the meantime retained a fairly large tract of land that was uneconomical for mine development (see Banchirigah, 2008). Even then, the sections of land released for ASM operations were leased to outside business concerns.[20] This limited the land available to artisanal miners and compelled them to make further inroads into the concessions of the company, encroaching on forest reserves and the lands of cocoa farmers in the district.

5.2 The Context: ASM Economy of the Birim North District

Despite agriculture still being considered the main economic activity in the district, communities that had 'struck' gold had experienced significant changes in their socioeconomic structures (BNA, 2006). Gradually, galamsey was replacing agriculture as the inhabitants and households had increasingly recognised the opportunities and diversified their livelihood accordingly. The departure from traditional activity was more evident as youth and women were progressively taking up galamsey and becoming involved as operators and providers of ancillary services.

Before the introduction of galamsey in the district, most young people migrated to the cities in search of better livelihood opportunities, rejecting agriculture on the basis that it was not profitable. Personal interviews with migrant respondents from the Northern Regions indicated their disdain for farming,

[20] Newmont had agreed in principle, and in consultation with the Minerals Commission, acting on behalf of the state, to cede its Noyem concession to Noyem and its surrounding communities. However, before its implementation the chiefs of Noyem and Nyafoman had been embroiled in a dispute over jurisdiction. Hilson (2008: 396) noted that a compromise was reached with "the Noyem chief and his followers retaining their positions on the Noyem concession, [and] the Nyafoman chief's gangs relocating to neighbouring Sekapee". At the time of fieldwork, Noyem had given out portions of its allocated land to the Agudea Mining Company, a local small-scale mining firm to undertake exploration. Unfortunately, though, Newmont was yet to totally release the demarcated lands (Patel et al., 2016), the two communities continued to, albeit illegal, maintain and control galamsey activities in their respective realm; they, however, allowed galamsey operators irrespective of their domicile to dig for gold.

claiming that it did not offer quick returns; even those who were previously farmers dismissed the idea of ever returning, and preferred other business ventures such as trading when they stopped working in galamsey. An excerpt from an interview with a migrant in Nyafoman illustrates how youth in typical farming communities were not only abandoning farming for galamsey, but were not planning to go back:

> *It (*galamsey*) has been good and it is better than farming. What I make in a month in galamsey is even more than what I make in farming for a whole year or even two…. if my dreams of travelling outside don't materialise, I will return to my hometown and start a trade, maybe open a shop in the market. (Interview, Migrant Galamsey Operator (15), Nyafoman, 13/08/14).*

It was thus no coincidence that ASM had attracted many individuals, groups and households, both in the district and in other outlying localities in the country. In 2008, estimates placed the number of artisanal miners at around 30,000 in Noyem and its surrounding communities (see Banchirigah, 2008). However, during the period of the fieldwork, despite the fact that considerable numbers were observed, there were no credible data on the current numbers involved in the activity. Notwithstanding that fact, deductions from several reports and interviews suggest that the numbers far exceeded the previous estimate. In June 2013, the Ghana Business News reported that the majority of youth in gold mining communities in the Eastern Region were resorting to galamsey and had rejected jobs offered to them by the District Assemblies (GBN, 2013). Similarly, the 2010 Population Census reported that most youth in the district, especially males, were engaged in perilous economic activities, of which galamsey was a preferred option despite being considered the riskiest (GSS, 2013). A comparison of the 2010 annual growth rates showed that Birim North had one of the highest increases, of about 3.4 percent as against an average of 2.5 percent in the region (GSS, 2012).

> *Youth who were hitherto unemployed, have all been actively engaged in it (*galamsey*) and it has provided them enough to take care of themselves and family as well as to acquire some assets. All my male children are involved in galamsey and they seem to be doing well (Adult Interviewee (15), trader from Noyem, 17/09/14.)*

> *When galamsey commenced here, more than half of the women were unemployed and depending solely on their spouses and families, to say nothing of the youth. Because most of them loathed farming, the only available option aside from idling was to migrate in search of a livelihood. Before galamsey, more than half of the youth left this place for the big towns like Accra, Kumasi and Nkawkaw, but galamsey changed all that. There is hardly a youth in the community who is not engaged in galamsey, either as a miner or performing one of the many ancillary services. This has stopped the outflow of youth from this place and has given them a livelihood. (Adult Interviewee (11), farmer from Akoase, 11/09/14).*

> *Galamsey has been with us for the past 8 years… this brought a lot of migrants here and together with the community they embarked on this activity. There is hardly a youth in this community who is not part of galamsey (Adult Interviewee (13), farmer from Nyafoman, 15/09/14).*

The large numbers were due partly to the increased involvement of the host, and partly to the large influx of migrants from both far and near. As discussed earlier, the traditional mainstay of the district

had been gradually eroded and replaced by galamsey. This was reinforced by women's increasing involvement in one way or another, and farming was largely left to the older community members. A citation from a study by Hilson and Garforth (2012: 348) a couple of years earlier confirmed the observation that increasingly, galamsey was becoming the primary income source and the main activity of people in the district:

> *Right now, here, when they finish mine work, people rush back to do farming. Mining hasn't taken over completely, but now we're doing the mining. In the next three years, it will become our main activity. (Artisanal miner, Kobriso, Eastern Region, Ghana, taken from Hilson and Garforth, 2012: 348).*

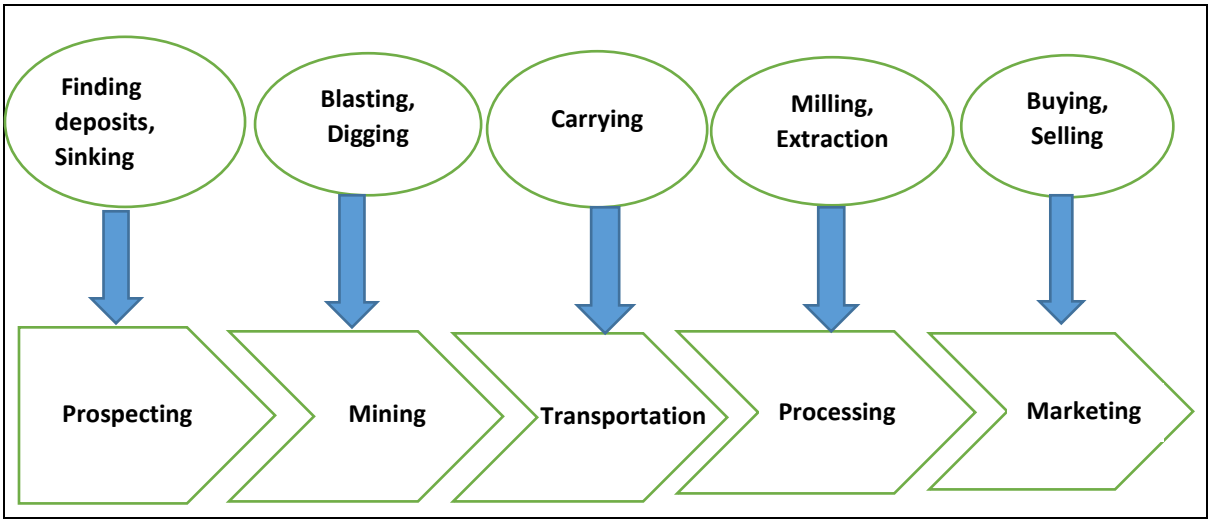
Though galamsey can be found throughout the region and had been undertaken for an indefinitely long period, the scale presently witnessed in communities in the Birim North District was unprecedented. It was believed that galamsey began in earnest around late 2005 to 2006, perhaps just before or immediately after the Newmont Mining Corporation began operations. Personal communications with adult members revealed that though in the past one could pick up gold pieces along the river banks or in the gutters when it rained, they had no idea of the magnitude of the deposits on their land. While most respondents could not state how galamsey began in the district, some believed that it began when those not successful in gaining employment with the Newmont Gold Mining Company began prospecting for gold along the 'layer' from the company's main site. Others intimated that they migrated to the district to work not for the company, though they heard that they were recruiting, but on the fringes of its concession. Initially, gold was found in Noyem, and later discoveries were made in Nyafoman, Akoase, Adadeam and Mpintimpi. Commenting on the Noyem community before and during galamsey, a respondent remarked that:

> *Before galamsey this was a typical farming village community, but when the news that gold had been discovered here filtered out, the face of the community changed. In a matter of days after the news, this community was inundated with migrants from almost every corner of the country and even beyond (Adult Interviewee (12), retired teacher from Noyem, 09/09/14)).*

Not only had galamsey in the mining communities contributed to the dynamics of the economy, but it had been a significant generator of migrants. It was believed that the miners came from as far afield as Nigeria, Togo and Burkina Faso, but the majority were from Achiase and its environs in the Eastern Region, as well as from parts of the Western Region and the three Northern Regions in the country. Noyem was been the epicentre of galamsey, attracting the majority of migrants, with the rest dispersed among the other four neighbouring communities. The influx of migrants along the Nkawkaw-New Abirem Road after the news filtered out felt like an invasion, but the communities welcomed them, recognising an immense opportunity: their way out of poverty, lack of employment and a way to halt the drain of their abled youth to the cities and towns. The shortage of employment opportunities in the country meant that any community fortunate enough to have such an opportunity would, with a little trepidation, accept migrants besieging their space.

With most coming from very challenging backgrounds, the artisanal miners' financial restrictions (Hilson, 2001) and limited access to funds (Barry, 1996) played a major contributing factor in the method of mining that they adopted. It was therefore not uncommon to find galamsey miners adopting manual methods using fairly simple tools including "shovels, pickaxes, pans, chisels and hammers", and this was true across the country. However, they had gradually come to rely on advanced machinery such as milling plants (changfans), air compressors and water pumps, which they hired or acquired from their sponsors[21], to reduce time and effort spent in manual labour. The use of various machines meant that now a much bigger area could be covered, more load could be shifted and milled, and thus more gold could be extracted. This instituted a division of labour in ASM, where individuals adopted specific functions such as operating machines, digging, carrying the load to machine sites and performing overseer roles (the various site committees). Below is an illustration of the chain of activities observed at the mining sites in the communities.

Fig 5.1: Miners' description of the chain of activities of galamsey in the Birim North District



Source: Modified after Mutemeri et al. (2010).

In the initial stages of pit development, artisanal miners prospected for gold by taking samples dug from the pit they had constructed. Several small pits were dug till a sample showed that the location was prospective. Then the miners dug several holes of about an arm's length and inserted dynamite. After blasting, the ore was gathered, broken into pieces and put it into sacks (load). The load was transported by women (discussed in later sections) to the machine sites for milling and extraction. At the final stage, the miners sold the gold to the many licensed gold buyers, either on site or in the community. Prospecting and mining was carried out by the miners and other duties were undertaken by other actors, including machine operators and licensed gold buyers.[22] Fig. 5.1 summarises the

[21] Sponsors are investors who buy these machines for hire or give money to the miners to hire them.
[22] It was observed that a few of the miners preferred to just undertake prospecting and mining, after which they sold the load to other actors along the chain. Due to the fact that yields are uncertain after extraction, these miners sell the load at a lower cost, but shift the burden of risk onto the buyer.

sequence of galamsey activities, and is constructed from personal interviews with respondents and observations during visits to the various mining sites. Similarly, Box 5.1 also provides a summary of common characteristics of galamsey as found in the Birim North District.

However, it is worth mentioning that almost all the communities along the stretch of road from Akoase through Noyem and Nyafoman to Mpintimpi accessed the same mining sites. Irrespective of where a person hailed from, they could mine for gold if they gave the respective committee its requisite share of the load. Incidentally, though these mining sites were located in the forest and in farms, the Chiefs of Noyem and Nyafoman exercised control since they were the custodians and hence they claimed the load on behalf of the community.

Box 5.1: A summary of the common features of ASM in Birim North District

Technical structure	Mainly manual work involving the use of simple to medium level technologies such as water pumps, milling machines (changfans), compressors, hammers and chisels.
Organisation of activities	Mining activities were undertaken by gangs (teams), though it was common to find individuals working alone. The gangs were formed based on locality, and whether they were migrants or indigenes
Authority	Activities were largely illegal, but authority was derived from traditional leaders. A committee had been formed to see to the day-to-day running of mining sites, which collected a third of the sacks of mineral ore for the community as well as mediating in conflicts.
Migration patterns	A synthesis of permanent, seasonal and return-migrants (i.e. those who moved to other mining locations, but returned to the district. Migrants included a mixture of experienced miners (from other mining areas), first-time miners, and part-time miners.
Relations of migrant miners to the local community	Largely harmonious, with episodes of conflict with indigenous miners as well as with some members of the mining community. Conflicts over access and right to land and site, tensions etc.
Settlement arrangements	Settlements were within the communities, with the exception of Noyem, which had a migrant enclave. Most migrants rented from landlords, though a few of them owned their own houses.
Gold trade	The final product was sold to licensed gold buyers. In some situations, the gold was sold at a third of the value to sponsors.
Conflict resolution	Leaders of the gangs and ghetto owners were the first in line to resolve disputes. The committee was mandated by the traditional authorities to settle any conflict on site.

Source: Compiled from responses from interviewees and adapted from Gratz (2013).

5.2 Youth Migration Movements and Role in Galamsey

In the past, migration movements within Ghana flowed primarily from overpopulated regions lacking in resources such as land, in search of better opportunities. Gold mining and cocoa growing areas attracted migrants, especially young unmarried men. Although in the period after independence the flow moved from resource regions to the cities, often regarded as the 'bright light syndrome', the former continues to attract migrants to this day. Traditionally, communities in the Birim District experienced a net out-migration, until the siting of the Newmont Gold Mining Company and the subsequent discovery of gold in commercial quantities; this changed the flow of migration and the district experienced an influx of migrants as well as the return migration of indigenes who had gone to other parts of the country.

An indigene reported that:

> *We witnessed a sudden influx of migrants from all over the country, especially from the North and from Achiase. Almost all the communities along the main road experienced an increase in their populations, mainly galamsey boys and some women* (*Adult Interviewee (12), retired teacher from Noyem, 11/09/14).*

Another stated that:

> *Galamsey is a migratory activity, so when it began here lots of migrants came here. Now we have a transition period where you have some coming in and others leaving. There are lots of migrants who have made this place their home, they even move to other places to work but eventually come back here. (Interview, Host galamsey operator (1), Noyem, 22/07/14).*

These quotes show how in the initial stages of galamsey, migrants inundated the communities that had discovered gold; this was corroborated by various studies which noted that communities in the nascent stages of mine development had migrants moving in in numbers, often far outstripping the host population and mostly predominated by young males (see Amin, 1974; Ababio, 1999; Anarfi et al., 2003). The inflow of migrants into the district was confirmed by some key informants who claimed that since the discovery of gold, mining communities had witnessed a steady flow of migrants from various parts of the country. Though existing documentation on the number of migrants involved in galamsey across the country is scant, evidence gathered in a study by Nyame and Grant (2014) suggested that although both indigenes and migrants were involved in the activity, the latter group formed the majority.

Not only did migrants inundate the communities, especially in Noyem, but they became the main pit developers, processors of ore and providers of ancillary services, essentially controlling the whole galamsey economy. Apart from their numbers meaning greater participation in galamsey, their rich and immense experience had substantially increased productivity; this had translated into a relative increase in the standard of living in gold mining communities compared to the neighbouring farming communities. The success of galamsey, and the subsequent economic outlook of the communities, hinged on the active participation of migrants. To reinforce this point, available records showed that

before galamsey began in the district, the predominant occupations were agriculture, commerce and agro-processing (BNDA, 2010). However, communities in the district, including Noyem and Nyafoman, had in recent years seen a restructuring of livelihoods around gold, which had been reinforced by the influence and expertise of migrants. In most ASM communities, young people migrating from one mining site to the next prospective site introduced the "techniques of exploitation [as well as] their particular modes of organisation, norms and rules" (Gratz, 2009: 12); this was known as "galamsey culture crawl". Interviews with indigenous people revealed that without migrants, the traditional occupations of the communities would not have changed significantly. They attributed the gold boom and subsequent expansion of the economy in their communities to the ingenuity of migrants.

> *They taught us how to undertake deep mining and also how to extract gold from the rocks. What is happening in the community in terms of development has also been because of them (Interview, Host galamsey operator (16), Nyafoman, 13/08/14).*

> *Having the migrants here has been one of the best things that happened to us. They have helped expand the community and have shown us that there was wealth here. (Adult Interviewee (2), Kente weaver from Noyem, 08/09/14).*

> *The migrants have really helped us, in that, they were the ones who came to teach us how to mine for gold. And it is this experience that we have transferred to other areas. (Interview, Indigene-turned-migrant, Agyapoma, 15/09/14).*

These were only a few of the views expressed by indigenes, both young people and adults, showing that galamsey, which had become the mainstay of mining communities in the district, was accredited to migrants. The host (both adult and youth) respondents stated that without migrants they doubted very much that they would have been able to undertake galamsey, especially given its intricacies. However, the question is: who were these miners and where did they come from? What were their characteristics?

Box 5.2: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Migrant Youth Respondents

Attribute	Number	Percentage
Age		
15-20	0	0
21-29	28	54.9
30-35	23	45.1
Marital Status		
Single	13	25.5
Married	38	74.5
Educational Status		
No formal schooling	12	23.5
Primary	9	17.7
Junior Secondary Sch.	20	39.2
Senior Secondary Sch.	10	19.6
Previous Occupation		
Peasant Farmer	17	33.3
Driver	4	7.8
Mason	1	1.9
Miner	8	15.6
Construction Worker	1	1.9
Baker	1	1.9
Electrician	1	1.9
Trader/Hawker	2	3.9
Unemployed	7	13.7
Others	7	13.7
Years in the community /galamsey		
1 – 5	30	58.9
6 – 10	17	33.3
11 – 15	4	7.8
Regions of Origin	23	45.2
Eastern	1	1.9
Western	1	1.9
Central	3	5.9
Ashanti	1	1.9
Volta	5	9.8
Brong Ahafo	6	11.9
Northern	1	1.9
Greater Accra	7	13.7
Upper East	3	5.9
Upper West		

Source: Compiled from interviews with respondents in the Birim North District.

Box 5.2 illustrates the socioeconomic characteristics of migrant youth respondents. It shows that the majority were between the ages of 21 and 29, comprising 54.9 percent of the study population, followed by 45.1 percent who were between 30 and 35. Significantly, the study found no respondents within the age bracket of 15 to 20 years or below. This echoed the statements of committee members in mining sites in the selected communities, who insisted that they had put in place directives barring schoolchildren from partaking in galamsey and/or from mining during school periods. Needless to say, those who came in as teenagers before the directives were implemented were now in their late 20s and early 30s.[23] However, a cursory observation of the respondents showed that some of them were less than 20, but had lied about this for fear of dismissal. For instance, one of the respondents claimed to be 23, but his elder sibling was 21. While this could be attributed to ignorance of their age, which is often the case with illiterate rural inhabitants, it was evident that most of them made up their ages to be granted access to the mining sites. However, it is also worth mentioning that the age of these migrants was consistent with earlier studies by Cromartie (2000) and Guest (2006), who pointed out that people between the ages of 20 and 29 dominated migration streams and formed the largest number of internal migrants.

It was also found that most of the migrant youth (74.5 %) were married.[24] However, a further investigation indicated that of those who stated that they were not, a significant proportion were co-habiting and had migrated with their partners. Most respondents indicated that they had dependents, and it was not uncommon for single respondents to claim to have dependents, either a child or siblings, back home. Furthermore, of the total number of migrant youth miners interviewed, Box 5.2 shows that most, a total of 76.5 percent, had attained some level of education, including 17.7 percent at primary level, 39.2 percent at junior secondary level and 19.6 percent with some form of senior secondary school education. This revealed that most of the migrants had benefited from the government's Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE); however, a further 23.5 percent had no formal education. Despite this, it was almost impossible for them to gain any form of formal employment, and clearly, this was why they constituted the majority of migrants seeking jobs in the large informal sector. This was confirmed by Nnadi et al. (2012), who found a strong correlation between education levels and migration, indicating that a rising proportion of the migrant stream were those who had ended their education midstream. Similarly, while a study by Hilson and Garforth (2012) found professionals and tertiary students in galamsey, and that it was not uncommon to find an illiterate working alongside a graduate, this study did not find anyone with a tertiary education.

[23] Presently the mean entry age is consistent with the 24 years for gold miners found in Tanzania and other parts of sub-Saharan Africa (Jonsson and Bryceson, 2009).

[24] A study found that rural youth, especially women, were three times more likely to be married or in a union before the age of 18 (see http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/child-marriage/ghana). As such it was not uncommon to find that majority of the youth were married or in a union, as depicted in Box 3.

It is also worth mentioning that the literature suggested that not only was the largest proportion of migrants in developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, found in rural areas, but that they moved within these areas (de Haan, 1999). Similarly, Bakewell (1996) and Skeldon (2003) claimed that though internal migration was less documented and visible, most migrants moved short distances and stayed closer to their place of origin. One interviewee remarked that *"I can return to my home community to attend a funeral or an emergency and come back the same day"*.[25] Thus, in the course of fieldwork, the attempt was made to capture the place of origin of the migrant youth to see if these findings could be confirmed. The study revealed that most respondents were from the Eastern Region (the location of the district studied), signifying that migrants preferred to move closer to home. More than half of the interviewees chose to migrate to Noyem and its surrounding communities because of its proximity to their place of origin. This contrasted sharply with a recent study carried out in the region, which indicated that migrants from the region formed the minority (Fearon et al., 2015). Those from the three Northern Regions, namely the Northern, Upper East and Upper West, cumulatively formed the second-largest proportion of migrants. While these regions were further from the Eastern Region, it was not surprising that their inhabitants constituted the second-largest group in the mining communities because traditionally, the natives of those regions had seasonally moved to the south to work as manual labourers, and as Tonah (2005) claimed, the lack of economic activity and the recurrent drought had accentuated the movement of people, especially the youth, from the three Northern Regions. One respondent from the Northern Region stated that:

> *In my community, anyone who doesn't travel is not considered enlightened. Because of this coupled with hardship, I decided to migrate to the south in search of work (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (35), Akoase, 18/09/14).*

This showed the importance that people in the Northern Regions of Ghana attached to migration and, significantly, their numbers in the three communities selected for this study proved the assertion to be true. Though there were some migrants from the Western Region, an area noted for the proliferation of galamsey, most claimed to have relocated to the region and that it was not their region of birth. Furthermore, it was observed that there were fewer migrants from the Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions, arguably the two most economically endowed regions in the country.

If the immediate assertion was anything to go by, then aside from migrants preferring to move closer to their home localities, they also moved from regions with economic and employment challenges. While there was no doubt that often it was the search for a sustainable livelihood that motivated people to migrate, the following section critically assesses the main reasons for migration of youth from different parts of the country to the Birim North District. It also examines the sources from which migrant access their information about prospective gold locations.

[25] Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (4), Noyem, 23/07/14.

5.2.1 Motivation to Migrate

Often it has been thought that migrants were mostly youth, male, able and with the most skill, who left behind the vulnerable, such as the aged, children and women, whose plight was significantly highlighted. However, less consideration has been given to why those who migrated, especially youth, chose to do so. While poverty has been consistently regarded as a fundamental reason for migration among rural youth (World Bank, 2009), for a majority it also offered the opportunity to increase pride and status, prove their self-worth and enhance their livelihoods. Manu, a 27-year-old unemployed graduate of a technical school, left home to undertake galamsey after his mother consistently berated and shamed him, accusing him of being lazy while boys younger than him had made the journey and were periodically sending money home. To prove himself capable, he joined acquaintances who were already established galamsey miners.

Undoubtedly, the current economic stagnation and changing culture have been problematic for Ghana's youth, and have created conditions forcing them to pursue survival strategies, often to their detriment. Respondents reported motivating factors, including lack of employment opportunities and financial hardship, lack of interest in farming and peer pressure. For instance, agriculture, the main occupation in most of the communities of origin, was considered unattractive because of the hard work, long duration between yields and meagre earnings. This motivated youth migration in search of better opportunities. The younger generation's lack of interest in farming has often led to the perception that they were lazy and not prepared to face the gruelling tasks involved in farming, preferring 'quick money' and migrating in search of elusive 'greener pastures' (see Mitchell, 2012). However, respondents pointed out that it was the oppressive life in rural areas that severely constrained them and limited their opportunities, thus compelling them to migrate, or, as Musah et al. (2010) found, to oscillate between farming and mining. Some respondents indicated that hardship was a compelling factor, with one asserting that:

> *It was hardship that made me decide to leave farming. Being a farmer was very difficult, especially what to eat during the planting season and the meagre income earned in the harvesting period due to glut. I couldn't make enough to fend for myself and saw the future as bleak. (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (40), Nyafoman, 18/09/14).*

For others, poverty was a determining factor, as George, a 24-year-old migrant from Achiase, explained. He said that he was forced to migrate when he couldn't complete school because his parents couldn't afford to educate all their children. He dropped out of school and took up menial jobs to survive while looking out for opportunities. Hearing of galamsey and its prospects, he took the chance to try it out. Another respondent decided to migrate due to peer pressure, indicating that he

> *…decided to become a miner when a friend of mine returned from this place. He had completed his house and furnished his room very well. Looking at the stuff that he had achieved in a short while, I decided that I would come and try it (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (42), Nyafoman, 19/09/14).*

These peer networks were an essential element in relationships with friends, and a critical factor in influencing behaviours. It was noted that such peer influence was a critical factor in rural youth migration (see Blum, 2007). Other factors were unemployment, the need for capital to expand business, the need to fund education, challenging economic conditions exacerbated by the death of a parent or guardian, and poor returns from agriculture. The difficulties experienced in their home communities were the major reasons for youth migration. For instance, those who were farmers prior to migration were 'driven out' of their communities by a combination of hardship, poverty and the inability to achieve economic autonomy, since rural production was a joint undertaking (Bennel, 2007).

Despite the compelling reasons identified above, a critical factor that resonated among the respondents was 'chance': the chance of what they stood to lose if they didn't migrate. Whether or not they would succeed was a challenging question for young migrants. The decision to migrate had its related 'opportunity cost', in the loss of the benefits of their current ventures. But since most of them were either unemployed or on low incomes, this cost was very low, and the decision to take the 'chance' to migrate was often made rationally with this in mind. Most were mindful of the possible regret of not taking the chance, hoping that it would work out for them given that not all those who migrated succeeded. Notwithstanding the risk associated with working as an illegal mining operator, especially the risk of arrest by security agencies, young migrants reasoned that life was too short to wait and taking the 'chance' could change their life for the better.

Table 5.1: A summary of the reasons motivating youth to migrate to undertake galamsey

Reasons influencing youth into galamsey (expressed during interview)	**Percentage of respondents who gave this opinion (%)**
Poverty and hardship (including poverty of parents)	28
Unemployment and underemployment	13
Challenges associated with farming (including the lack of interest and scanty earnings)	18
Death of parents/guardians	5
Taking a chance	12
Need for capital to undertake a business venture, settle a debt or to continue education	9
Peer pressure from friends and siblings	15

Source: Compiled from field data, 2014.

Table 5.1 summarises respondents' reasons for choosing to migrate from their previous places of residence or work to undertake galamsey. The table shows that economic reasons were broadly the main motive, with poverty and hardship being the reason most cited. Interestingly, the element of chance was also mentioned. Though most respondents gave multiple answers, only the leading response was considered. While 28 percent of respondents mentioned poverty and hardship, 13 percent stated that unemployment and underemployment was their main reason. 18 percent gave

reasons related to farming, 5 percent to the death of a supporting parent/guardian, 9 percent because of the need for capital to start a business, and 15 percent due to peer pressure from friends/siblings, while 12 percent decided to move based on chance, reasoning that there was every possibility that they might succeed as others had in the past.

FGDs and analysis of background data revealed that proximity – the distance between the place of origin and the destination – was a major factor in migrants' decisions to move from their home communities. Considering the cost, time and energy involved in migrating, most migrants preferred to move short distances to minimise the cost of moving, the time involved and the energy exerted, as well as to make it easier to visit home. It was thus not surprising that most of the migrants originated from neighbouring districts in the Eastern Region. As earlier discussed and as shown in Box 5.2, more than 45 percent of respondents selected for the study originated from such communities. This clearly validated the claim of an inverse relationship between the distance travelled and the volume of migrants. Similarly, it proved that migrants preferred to travel shorter distances to offset cost and time (see Coombs, 1987).

Though various studies had shown that the motivation to migrate went beyond economic determinism (see Reuveny (2007) on environmental induced migration and Rudzit (1999) on social and physical environment induced migration), the study found that the primary reasons for youth migration were economic ones. Hoping to improve their financial positions, young men moved away from debilitating poverty, stagnation in their lives, low earnings from present jobs or unemployment, into galamsey camps (Fearon et al., 2015). However, their migration was not predicated on this urge alone, but also on rational, well thought-out decisions, often made on a temporary basis to earn enough to support other livelihood options. However, in the end, these migrants were trapped in a cycle of poverty (Childs, 2008; Hilson, 2012).

5.2.2 Sources of Information

Similarly, suitable relocation sites were not chosen in isolation or on impulse, but with a specific desire for better and most satisfying outcomes than they would gain in other places or in their current locations. Such decisions, however rational, relied on information from others, and migrants had no control over this. Because they had no direct knowledge of the intended locations from which they had to choose, the credibility of information was crucial to their decisions. The sources of information given in the interviews were, in order of importance, family and friends, the media and the rumour mill.

5.2.2.1 The Affinity Premise

The propensity to migrate to a particular location increased when the potential migrant had a relative or friend already established there, because they knew what the living conditions were like, and adjustment was easier with material and emotional support. Every respondent placed information

from friends and family highly, and this was the main source of information for most of the artisanal miners. This was regarded as the most authentic and reliable source of information, which ASM operators relied on in deciding where to go. Kwasi Oppong, a baker by trade, said he heard that galamsey was taking place in Nyafoman from friends who were visiting their families in his hometown. Though he stated that "*it was very unlikely that you would migrate to a place where you do not know anyone*"[26], his decision to migrate was based not only on the information he obtained from his friends, but also on the assurance of a place to stay and immediate work. Shared stories told by the respondents during fieldwork reinforced the perception that family and friends represented perhaps the most important source of information for transitory[27] and intending migrants. The following are excerpts of the dialogue from interviews with the artisanal youth miners:

> *My decision to relocate here was influenced by a friend who called that he had a pit here, and that the grade of gold was far better than in Tarkwa. Taking into consideration the spate of injuries, death and police brutalities, I decided to pack my scant belongings and move here (Interview, migrant galamsey operator (10), Noyem, 29/09/14).*
>
> *I had an acquaintance from my village who had been doing galamsey for a long time. When I told him that I wanted something to do, he said galamsey was my best option. So, he brought me here. I hadn't heard of this community before (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (15), Akoase, 01/08/14).*
>
> *I met a friend who was looking good and from enquiries, he told me about galamsey and I decided to join him (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (26), Ewinso, suburb of Noyem, 13/08/14).*

Similarly, reverse migrants, including Macho, who as well as working in galamsey was operating a drinking spot, said that they decided to return from their sojourn on hearing from family members that gold had been discovered in the district and that most of the young people had become involved. These migrants had not simply taken their families' word for this, but based their decisions on visible confirmation. They observed the acquisitions and achievements of those who gave the information before deciding to migrate. Indeed, it would be irrational to migrate when the family member or friend appeared to be relatively worse off than before.

5.2.2.2 The Media

Also, artisanal miners had occasionally relied on the media to decide on their next move. The media in the country had become very vibrant, with local rural radio stations affiliated to and sourcing news content from established urban media houses, so that topical news was disseminated quickly. With the proliferation of local language radio stations and the ease of obtaining small battery-operated radio receivers, news of new galamsey areas, rumours of potential security strikes, accidents etc. filtered in faster and people understood what was being broadcast. The media reports of issues relating to galamsey inadvertently attracted new migrants into these areas. Interviews revealed that some

[26] Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (40), Nyafoman, 18/09/14.

[27] Because galamsey is a migratory venture, the term is used to refer to artisanal miners, the majority of whom move from place to place in search of prospective gold-laden land.

respondents had relocated to the district upon hearing from the media that galamsey was taking place. Linked to this was the increased use of mobile communication and applications to disseminate news and information among the miners. These media meant that news of potential discoveries spread faster and wider. Almost all the respondents had mobile phones and were connected to the internet, which eased the flow of communication among them. For instance, during the fieldwork, some of the gangs sent advance search teams to prospect for gold after they had received information on social media networks (e.g. WhatsApp and Viber) about the potential discovery of gold in Agyapoma, a community in the neighbouring East Akyem District. The miners were able to communicate instantaneously with the advance parties to make a quick decision about relocating. It is worth mentioning that receiving and processing information quickly invariably meant that gangs could secure the best plot of land ahead of their competitors.

5.2.2.3 The Rumour Mill

The rumour mill was an indispensable age-old information tool for galamsey miners. While rumours were treated with cynicism and disdain within organisations, they provided an active vehicle for the dissemination of information among ASM operators. For instance, galamsey pioneers in the district heard rumours of the discovery of gold and of a foreign mining company recruiting workers. Rather than seek employment, they sent advance teams to authenticate the rumours. They struck gold in Noyem and subsequently in its neighbouring communities. Similarly, a section of the new entrants also stated that they heard various accounts of galamsey filtering into their home communities, and they took the chance to verify these reports. The following excerpts indicate the importance that artisanal miners, both new and existing, attached to rumours.

> *As a galamsey worker, I always look out for information on areas where the sample is very good. I have been to Tarkwa and Prestea but only for a short period, and I heard of Nyafoman and Noyem from some of the workers. I decided to come and try my luck here (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (18), Nyafoman, 01/08/14).*

> *When I left Takoradi, I went to Koforidua and was working with some people, but they cheated me…. It was then that I heard that Newmont had come to Abirem to open a mine. I came here to look for work, but saw that most of the people I met here engaged in galamsey, right from Akoase through Noyem to Nyafoman (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (2), Noyem, 22/07/14).*

However, because rumours were considered less reliable, they were often used in tandem with other information sources, especially information from friends and family.

Table 5.2: A summary of sources of information that influenced the choice of current location

Migrants' sources of information (views stated by respondents)	Percentage of respondents who answered the question
Family and Friends	56
Rumours	24
The Media	14
Others (including close proximity and police raid)	6

Source: Compiled from field data, 2014

To the question of what informed their decision to come to their current place, the Birim North, most respondents, 56 percent, answered that they had received information from immediate family relations and close friends who were already undertaking galamsey in the district. These responses, as referred to in Table 5.2, indicated how migrants decided on where to go based on acquaintance with someone in that locality. This reiterates the importance of social contacts as a determining factor in where migrants moved to, and the critical role that networks played in informing the movement of prospective migrants. Stories of a gold strike in one locality or another were also frequently mentioned as a source of information instigating a move. While it could be argued that this information and the resultant decision to move were based purely on chance, the miners relied on it, especially those who had had multiple relocations. However, because of the likelihood of false information, miners sent advance teams to ascertain the reliability of rumours, suggesting that such decisions were rationally thought out. In addition to the above-mentioned sources of information, the young miners stated that they often relied on the media to determine localities where galamsey was flourishing. With the increased proliferation of the media and their tendency to be the first to report on topical news, including galamsey issues and especially pertaining to conflicts and the collapse of pits, these media houses were a preferred source of information for 14 percent of the respondents.

5.3 Female Migration and Role in Galamsey in the Birim North District

So far, the discussion has centred on male youth, especially as the participation of female migrants in ASM has received very little attention where both mining and migration were considered male-dominated activities. Often, the literature on migration and ASM gave cursory attention to the role of young female migrants, subordinating their contribution to that of young men. This situation was even more pronounced in rural Ghana, where traditionally women were tied to "household management, child care, providing assistance to family farms" (Yakovleva, 2006: 4), often migrating only to join their husbands. Here, I explore how women end up in galamsey mining camps and the roles that they play.

Contemporary Ghana has witnessed increased participation of females in income-generating ventures outside of household-tied activities, as women strive to supplement household incomes due to a myriad of factors including escalating poverty and malnutrition (IFAD, 2014). Despite the increasing role that females played within the household and the rural economy, they were continually inhibited

by a set of societal norms, limited financial capacity and policies that restricted their self-actualization (Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2012). There is no doubt that the proliferation of ASM activities in the country was due partly to the significant participation and contribution of females, who account for about 50 percent of the galamsey population. However, despite their involvement and struggles within the sector, they have been largely ignored in policy and research. Even in those rare cases where women have been recognised in policymaking within the industry, this has been in an attempt to protect them. For instance, the Mines Act, 1952 sought to shield women from the hazardous nature of mining, stating that "no woman shall, notwithstanding anything contained in any other law, be employed (a) in any part of a mine which is below-ground, and (b) in any mine above ground except between the hours 6 am and 7 pm".[28] But, notwithstanding their marginalised position, women's roles in ASM had led to "the fast development and sustenance of the sector" (Dinye and Erdiaw-Kwasie, 2012: 289).

Though the involvement of women in galamsey in the Birim North District was commonplace, the limited studies on female participation has rarely agreed on any one line of inquiry. For instance, there was no consensus on the number of females involved in galamsey in the district: one study estimated it at 40 percent (Yakovleva, 2006); another said it was about 10 percent (Fearon et al., 2015). Aside from the apparent divergences in numbers, very little has been done to acknowledge that the female population was made up of migrants and indigenes, with the former, as with their male counterparts, forming the majority. Equally, there have been very few attempts to understand the dynamics that led women into galamsey and into the roles they adopted. Data from FGDs with migrant women stimulated the debate of female migrant participation in galamsey, revealing their motivation to migrate and the part that gender roles (Hinton et al., 2003) played in the district.

The migration of females into the district was not a recent phenomenon. Before the introduction of galamsey, migrants, including women, came into communities, some to trade and others to purchase kola nuts, a fruit that was prevalent in the area alongside cocoa. However, these women only stayed for short periods, mostly during the harvest seasons. With a lack of credible data, it was difficult to estimate the gender composition of these migrants. However, the evidence of respondents suggested that women formed an ample proportion of the migrant population, performing various direct and indirect roles including carrying and washing the ore and selling food and other supplies, both in the communities and at the sites. During a focus group discussion with migrant women[29] at the mining site in Nyafoman, participants provided constructive insights about their motivation to migrate:

> *In the past, it was our men who travelled, but we are all humans with blood flowing in our veins, and we feel the pangs of hunger, poverty and hardship in the North. I came*

[28] http://ncw.nic.in/acts/TheMinesAct1952.pdf, accessed 18/10/14).

[29] It is worth mentioning that the majority of the migrant women are from the three northern regions of the country, with only a few from the Eastern Region.

here to undertake this menial job so that I can make enough to take care of my children's upkeep (FGD, Spokesperson for migrant women; Nyafoman mining site, 27/08/14).

While the reasons for migrating were not different from those of their male counterparts, unlike the men, a majority of the women were either with a child or married with children when they migrated, and this presented an added motivation. They migrated not only to increase their quality of life and future security, but to ensure that their children's needs for a good education, food and clothing were met. One female respondent, a widow of 29, migrated to sell food to the miners. She reported that she earned more in a week than her month's salary as a primary school teacher. With the added income, she could afford private schooling for her children and cover their household needs. The women unequivocally agreed that increasingly, village life had taken a turn for the worse, especially for them, due to the feminisation of poverty and a lack of direct access to land and jobs in their home counties. So, not content with their condition, they opted to migrate to search for better opportunities. With poverty and hardship as the prevailing factor for the majority, the unmarried migrated too, to earn enough to buy items for marriage.

The decision to relocate to a particular locality was predicated on the availability of jobs or having a relative already established in the area.

The lack of jobs coupled with the huge number of migrants meant that jobs were hard to find in Accra, the big towns and well-known galamsey areas like Prestea and Bogoso as these places were already choked with them. So, when we heard of this place, we moved here (FGD, Migrant Youth Female, Nyafoman mining site, 27/08/14).

This indicated that some of the female migrants, like their male counterparts, relied on rumours in their search for suitable locations in which to earn a living. However, a significant proportion relocated with their partners, whilst the rest chose the district because some of their tribe's people had already relocated and had urged them to move as well.

Consequently, despite their active participation in galamsey, women's roles are often inhibited by several socioeconomic, cultural and security factors. Indeed, the marginalised and disadvantaged position of women, which was characteristic all over sub-Saharan Africa (see UNCEA, 2011), was not only subject to socioeconomic and cultural taboos that bar them from certain roles, but was reinforced by their inability to access key financial resources. Despite the diversity and distinct features of ASM communities in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, women's roles were similar (ILO, 2007), and they were restricted to 'inherited gendered roles' ascribed by society, mainly by men.[30] Women did not feature prominently in the district, playing marginal roles in the various mining sites visited. The gangs going into the pits were exclusively male; women were not allowed underground. When questioned about this, the women claimed that was the general rule, but could not

[30] Werthman (2009) found that in Burkina Faso, while underground mining was the preserve of men, women's roles were relegated exclusively to alluvial and traditional gold panning, and even in situations where a few women were privileged to own pits, it was their male partners who undertook their day-to-day management.

give any meaningful explanation, showing their marginalised position as stakeholders in galamsey. Sadly, despite women's active participation, only the men were identified as "galamseyfo" (galamsey people).

Though women were not allowed into the pits, they were permitted around the pit area to carry the miners' loads to the changfans for a fee of GH 2 cedis (£0.40) per load. One female respondent stated that:

> *We carry the load from the pits to the machine site. However, going underground isn't a job for women and even the committee will not allow a woman into the pit, this is the law here (FGD, Migrant Youth Female, Nyafoman mining site, 27/08/14).*

The strict enforcement of sociocultural taboos meant that certain activities could not be undertaken by women. This was confirmed by the members of the committees on the various sites visited, who stated that due to the physiological differences between men and women, the latter were not allowed to undertake certain roles. However, a major factor in this was cultural (spiritual), because gold was considered either a spirit or a gift from the spirits, who abhorred the presence of menstruating women, thus women were not allowed so as to avoid angering the spirits.[31] Across parts of sub-Saharan Africa (see Werthmann, 2009), the reasons for not permitting women ranged from the eccentric, a belief that women were fainthearted and could easily fall into the pits, to the mystical, that they would chase the gold away if they were menstruating. This restriction of women's activities was not peculiar to galamsey, but was widely practised in most traditional occupations among communities in sub-Saharan Africa.

In galamsey, women provided mortars, pestles, 'sample tires' and containers of water to enable the men to test rock samples for gold. The women pounded the sample, then the men used the sample tire to test for gold. Afterwards, the women scavenged whatever gold they could find in the container. Observations on the field showed that the women who carried the load were mainly from the northern part of the country, and that indigenous women sold food, drinks, clothes and other mining-related products such as flashlights, batteries, and dynamite.[32] However, during fieldwork, I noticed that the indigenous women increasingly joined the northerners in the carrying of the load. There was occasional jostling for the load, but no conflicts ensued; however, there was potential for conflict between the two when competition intensified. A summary of some of the activities undertaken by females is shown in Box 5.3

[31] These strong beliefs and practices are observed in Mozambique, where women are banned because of the inherent belief that they attract bad spirits.

[32] This confirms a study by Yakovleva in 2007, which found that after almost a decade of mining in the district, women's roles have not changed. Yakovleva (2007: 34) found that despite the significant presence and representation of women in terms of their numbers, their roles were limited to "selling food, carrying loads… and washing sands."

Box 5.3: Summary of activities performed by females in ASM sites

1. Carrying ore-bearing stones and sand from the pits to the machine sites for processing and mining supplies
2. Providing items needed to sample ore-bearing stones, including water containers, mortars and pestles
3. Shifting ore-bearing stones and sand onto the changfans (machines)
4. Pounding of ore-bearing stones and sand in metal mortars
5. Vendors of food and provisions, including basic mining supplies
6. Scrapping topsoil with hoes and pickaxes to gather ore-bearing sand

Source: Researcher's observation during fieldwork in the Birim-North District (2014)

Since women's work was considered ancillary to men's, their remuneration was considerably lower. The ILO (2007) indicated that women in ASM in Ghana earned as little as one-fifth what the males made, and this had forced a few them to engage in commercial sex work to supplement what they earned. Though none of the females who took part in the FGD would identify themselves with such practices, they concurred that prostitution was commonplace due to high demand from the men.

However, while women's roles might seem marginal, covering activities relegated and neglected by men, the women found these jobs to be very meaningful and rewarding. Most of them could support their husbands and pay their household expenses, and in some cases, they were the breadwinners. As with male youth, galamsey had given them a voice and security, especially for those who were single parents or widowed.

Plate 1: Women going about their roles on a mining site in the Birim North District

Source: Author's fieldwork

5.4 Interrelationship among Migrant Miners

Often, the movement from one mining site to another, which was commonplace, coupled with socioeconomic and practical factors, led to relationships that govern day-to-day activities and survival in a field fraught with danger, conflict and state persecution. Despite mining communities being considered volatile environments and "hot spots of consumption, normative transgressions and daily economic struggles" (Gratz, 2009:12), artisanal miners were committed to internal rules and unique behavioural and relationship patterns. Also, ASM activities demonstrated a level of structure, and more importantly, a diverse range of relationships among stakeholders, especially among miners.

5.4.1 The Gang: The Foundation of the Relationships among Miners

Due to the migratory nature of galamsey, young miners moved from one site to another, so that over time, ties to family back home weakened; this was compensated by the building of new relationships. As previously stated, migrant miners worked as gangs, and these formed a foundation for new relationships. The nature of these relationships was explained in different ways by different people. While some claimed that their relationships were long-standing through multiple location changes, others believed that gang leaders were instrumental in the formation of the gang and the resultant relationships. According to the latter group of respondents, a leader was responsible for positive relationships within the gang. Thus, a good team leader should exhibit a sense of responsibility and

fairness to retain gang members. A gang leader in Nyafoman stated that his main priority was to maintain peace and unity among members at all times, ensuring that they were always close. Though as with all groups, disagreements were inevitable, his responsibility was to resolve any disputes harmoniously. Others formed their gang based on place of origin. For instance, a member of a gang from Akim Oda claimed that because they grew up together, it was easy to come together, and that they were like 'brothers', doing everything together.

Further responses from the field showed that some of the miners preferred a gang that was not static, and that allowed members to work for other gangs as they wished. According to a member of an 'open' gang, this was a loosely formed association of migrant friends, where a member could work with any gang but reverted to his own gang when needed. This situation was advantageous to members, particularly when the gang had to wait for a couple of days or more for a new exploitation period.[33] However, this did not appear to be the norm, with most respondents claiming a close-knit relationship that continued after the miners had moved to another site or returned home temporarily. Discussions with respondents revealed that in one instance, where all but one of a gang had migrated, the remaining members would welcome them back, while another respondent who intermittently returned home stated that:

> *I have built a good relationship with my gang, so that whenever I come back, they are quick to welcome me into the fold. Over the years, we have maintained a closed-knit relationship. We do everything together (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (26), Ewinso, outskirt of Noyem, 13/08/14).*

When questioned whether family ties took precedence over friendship or experience in the formation of gangs[34], respondents revealed that they had no particular preference for familial ties over friendship or vice versa. While some of the gangs were formed by relatives and even siblings, others were made up of friends who knew each other from the areas of origin, in previous mining sites or in the current site. Gangs of friends said that apart from sharing equally the drudgery of mining and the earnings, they also shared leisure activities and information.

While the gang was creditably the foundation of relationships among artisanal miners, it thrived on key elements to maintaining good relations, without which there would be bad blood and hostility. These extremely important elements in maintaining good relations are discussed below.

5.4.1.1 Trust and Mutual Respect

Though artisanal miners were far from altruistic, seeking to amass as much wealth as possible in a short period, there were codes of conduct running through all the gangs. Respondents noted that trust

[33] A similar situation was found in Benin, where the gangs are very flexible such that the miners could leave a gang at short notice (Gratz, 2003).

[34] While in Colombia mining operations were undertaken as part of household production, with participating family members sharing profits as well as critical decisions (Tubb, 2015), this was not the case in Tanzania and Benin, where much emphasis was placed on capability, experience and friendship.

and mutual respect were the bedrock of good relations among gang members. As well as strengthening bonds and increasing motivation, they allowed the gang to give due consideration to differing opinions and views of its members. Most respondents opined that their relationships were built on trust of each other's judgement, and also on the bonds of affection and respect they had developed over the period they had been mining together. One gang member suggested that:

> *Any gang that has stayed together for more than one year has a close relationship and trusts each other. That is the relationship we have in my gang. We trust each other and do everything in common (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (41), Nyafoman, 19/09/14).*

Another said:

> *We have known each other for several years and act more like siblings. We trust each other's judgement. There is an affectionate bond among us. We have come to regard ourselves as brothers. (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (32), Nyafoman, 27/08/14).*

In this respect, a miner's position in the gang was assured if he demonstrated trustworthiness, shared ideas with other members and respected their views. Because their operations were open to physical hazards, the miners nurtured a sense of solidarity to ensure their very survival. This unity meant that the gang looked out for each other and took responsibility for the safety of everyone. The galamsey terrain was often characterised by deep-rooted mistrust and covetousness among miners, with the potential for tension and violence. Thus, the relationships among gang members provided a way of transcending this distorted environment and ensured cohesion as well as sustainable earnings.

However, the essential virtue of a miner in a group was not reliability, but the ability to undertake hard work (Bryceson and Jonsson, 2010). A good team member, aside from not being a cheat, could be relied upon to share duties and responsibilities. Though a gang member may be welcomed back due to a long-standing relationship, a lazy member may not have the privilege of automatic inclusion. The miners were morally obligated to contribute equally in the drudgery of daily work, participating according to physical capabilities and expertise and equally accepting any reprimands for laziness and absenteeism. Respondents reported that miners were expected to provide assistance to their colleagues, such as helping in periods of need, and also to respect members of their gang and avoid disputes among themselves. Invariably, these values and dictates had gone a long way in shaping robust relationships among the miners.

5.4.1.2 The Act of Belonging

The miners talked in the plural, in terms of "we". The gang defined who they were, and they afforded more recognition to other members than to a relative and would most probably defend them with their lives. They saw strength in numbers; a bigger gang could excavate substantial quantities of ore-bearing stones and could defend itself from opposition or from discrimination from the host. This led

to a sense of oneness, with the gang representing acceptability, respectability and stability, and failure to be part of a gang meant alienation and loneliness.

> *This job needs a lot of hands and cooperation, so it is always good to be closer to your gang members. We consider ourselves as one and do a lot of things together such as eating and having leisure time together. (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (12), Noyem, 29/07/14).*

The miners were satisfied with the personal connectedness within their group. They felt accepted because the gang rallied round them in difficult circumstances as well as in happier times. This was clearly illustrated by Wilson (2001) who suggested that being part of a team meant that they identified with the gang, felt safe by being part of the group and were encouraged not only to take part in activities but to contribute to the success of the group.

However, there were times when, rather than working as a cohesive team for the common good, group members became competitive towards one another. Adding to the many other issues that a gang may face, tensions and conflict could arise, in part about who had ultimate control of the group. There was an occasional struggle for power as members became aware of power dynamics within the group, and this bred anger and resentment which could easily undermine efforts to work together. For instance, the power dynamics within a gang had been upset when members had been affected unfavourably by a leader's decisions.

> *Even though we have a very close relationship, the gang is not static and people can leave as they wish. Those who are not happy with the way the gang is run have always left to join other gangs or work alone (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (42), Nyafoman, 19/09/14).*

A couple of the respondents intimated that they had fallen out with one gang or another due to disagreements and power struggles. Respondents in FGD reported that normally the gang would try to resolve differences; however, a persistent recalcitrant who constantly challenged the leader or disrupted activities was summarily dismissed. Similarly, gang members would abandon an overbearing leader to form new alliances with other gangs.

Despite the advantages of belonging to a gang, a few preferred to work alone, enjoying the independence. Salifu, from Techiman in the Brong Ahafo Region, stated that having worked under his master for several years in multiple locations, he felt his progress was being stifled and he decided to separate from his master. He now worked on his own, aiming to start his own gang in the near future.

5.4.1.3 Reciprocity

Reciprocity was an essential element of artisanal gold mining, especially in West Africa (see Gratz, 2003)[35], such that without it, cohesion and stability would not exist. In its simplest classification,

[35] Indeed, it was Gratz (2003) who first found the element of reciprocity among artisanal miners in Benin. However, because artisanal mining began in Benin about a decade ago, it is possible that this norm of

reciprocity hinged on mutual "exchange of benefits between two or more [social] units" (Gouldner, 1960), where members believed that it would be unfair not to work hard, especially when one had enjoyed certain benefits from the group. The norm of reciprocity thus placed responsibility on all the miners, especially on those who had received help.

As well as its risk-sharing attributes, the gang was also seen as providing physical and economic security. An essential factor of a gang was that as well as sharing in happy times, it would rally round a member who was in trouble or bereaved. For instance, at times of bereavement, the gang contributed to the cost of the funeral and provided financial support till the person resumed work. Similarly, in situations where a miner was unable to work, especially due to sickness, it was mandatory that he received an equal share.[36]

Significantly, as Kojo, a 25-year-old migrant miner noted, over the years they had developed an arrangement that worked well for them, so that:

> *The relationship is based on trust and reciprocity. As well as sharing the proceeds equally, if a member is unable to mine with us, we give him an equal share of the proceeds. Because you may be indisposed the next time and such courtesy will be extended to you (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (13), Akoase, 01/08/14).*

Though a few gangs would not give an equal share to those absent or indisposed, most did, so that they could buy food and medicine. While some gangs offered a no-strings-attached share to the absentee, in others money was advanced on the understanding that the member would double his share of work on his return. A couple of the gangs, however, preferred to give daily 'chop money'[37] till the member resumed work. However, anyone absent without a tangible reason forfeited his share of the proceeds. Moreover, due to the continuous search for new sites that might offer more rewards than the current ones, occasionally the gangs sent advance teams to prospect, and supported them financially until they discovered gold or returned unsuccessful. During the fieldwork, many of the gangs sent members to Banda in the Northern Region and Agyapoma in the East Akyem District of the Eastern Region, and they regularly remitted them. Essentially, reciprocity guaranteed socioeconomic security for gang members, enabling them to attain a fitting standard of living which could be provided neither by working alone nor by the state during periods of adversity. While it eliminated inequality, it created great potential for dependency and laziness, especially as some members might free-ride on others. However, this was addressed by the beneficiary putting in more effort to make up for his absence, or he risked being ostracised.

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reciprocity may have been passed on by migrant miners who had stayed in Ghana or by Ghanaians who had migrated to Benin.

[36] Consistent with the findings of Gratz (2003) in Northern Benin, the miner who is absent is given a share of the proceeds.

[37] Chop money is the local term for money for daily provisions of food and other household supplies, especially given by a husband to the wife.

5.4.1.4 Social Network: The Affinity Hypothesis

While in the past it was widely held that people migrated based on rational cost-benefit analysis (see Todaro, 1989), contemporary migration as seen within mining communities has increasingly been influenced by links to family and friends, who provide information about the intended localities. While the "push and pull" migration theory, which concentrated on the conditions pertaining in areas of origin and destination, was not to be discounted, the role of social network has recently played a large part in shaping migration decisions. This reduced the inherent risk and helped migrants settle comfortably in the area. The essence of migrant networks was that they connected would-be migrants to migrants in destination areas, enabling new migrants to fit in and minimising isolation and loneliness.

While the social network theory had been used to offer reasons for people to migrate (see Yaro, 2011), networks play a large part in broadening relationships among the miners. Most of the migrant miners interviewed indicated that they based their decisions to move to the district on information from family and friends who had migrated earlier.

> *My mother contacted a relative of ours who was already involved in galamsey. I came to stay with him for a year, after which I found my own place (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (34), Akoase, 10/09/14).*

> *I had a call from a friend who had moved from Tepa to Noyem. I lived with him till I was able to rent my own place. When I came here, they (my friends) helped me to settle. They took care of my accommodation and food for a while (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (13), Akoase, 01/08/14).*

> *Before I came, the church that I attended in Oda had a branch here and they found accommodation for me and some of the people who decided to tag along. However, my brother and his wife provided my meals till I was able to fend for myself (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (6), Noyem, 24/07/14).*

While any new entrant into a mining community would struggle to join a gang, and even more to find a pit, migrants who were 'networked' into mining communities transitioned smoothly, joining a gang they were already familiar with. The relationships formed through networks were essentially a product of mutual help. This involved pioneer migrants offering assistance such as accommodation, and helping new migrants join a gang. One respondent said that he doubted very much that someone would travel to a place where he did not know anyone. Rarely do people move into a new location without prior background information from a known acquaintance. According to this respondent, he learned that galamsey was booming in Noyem from some friends who had come back and "*the account they gave of this place was too good to be true, so I joined them when they were returning".*[38] Not only were new entrants attracted to the district by accounts from acquaintances, but so were more experienced miners, through tales communicated to them at their previous locations. The view expressed by a 'permanent miner' indicated how he made his way into the district:

[38] Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (13), Akoase, 01/08/14.

As a galamsey worker, I always look out for information on areas where the sample is very good. I have been to Tarkwa and Prestea but only for a short period, and heard of Nyafoman and Noyem from some of the workers. I decided to come and try my luck here. When I came here I joined their gang (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (18), Nyafoman, 01/08/14).

Most respondents already had access to or knew someone in the district prior to migration, confirming the extensive use of networks within the galamsey sector. Invariably, due to miners' reliance on these networks, they knew each other as friends from previous mining communities, from their home communities or as family members, and in one way or another this helped to cement their relationships. Interviewees' responses clearly indicated how networks had been used to forge relationships which transcended location, helped newcomers settle easily and promoted harmony. However, a few of the respondents survived as galamsey miners without the advantages of networks. The relatively easy entry and exit procedures of galamsey meant that it was not uncommon to find miners who migrated into the district without knowing anyone there, as seen in the excerpt below:

I heard people saying that gold had been discovered here and saw that most of the young men were leaving so I teamed up with a few friends and we came here. We didn't get any support when we got here and had to sleep in front of the school, but after a while, we were able to rent a room where all of us slept till we made enough to move into separate rooms (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (31), Akoase, 27/08/14).

5.4.1.5 Rules and Arrangements

While much of the literature on artisanal mining presents a system that is unstructured and ungovernable due to the informality of ASM (see Dreschler, 2001; Tschakert, 2009), the picture on the ground showed a very different scenario; the mining sites and the operations of the miners exhibited clear rules and a structured system of organisation. Despite the absence of formally established written rules and regulations, galamsey activities and relationships were governed by clear arrangements, informal unwritten rules, agreements and plans, and these were controlled by rewards and sanctions.[39] Though most respondents claimed that their gangs evolved from multiple relocations, they were mostly composed of new entrants and those who relocated together. They confirmed that their relationship was based not solely on comradeship, but on the acceptance and observance of the rules and regulations that governed their activities. A rule commonly stated, is "equal work for equal pay".

Our rule is that equal work deserves equal rewards. We all take part in the digging and extracting of gold and share the proceeds equally (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (17), Nyafoman, 01/08/14).

Though we don't have formal rules, we work on the principle of trust and equality, thus we share whatever we earn equally. (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (36), Noyem, 18/09/14).

[39] As shown by Gratz (2009) and Werthmann and Gratz (2012), the relationships of artisanal miners in Benin and Mali are in part structured by the rules that govern their behaviour.

Though establishing what constituted equal work could prove problematic, the respondents were surprisingly not concerned about this, insisting that they all participated in deciding what counted as proportional work for equal rewards. Duties were thus based on the skills, experience and strength of each miner. For instance, a "first-time" migrant miner noted that the gang he joined already had their rules laid down, and he had to comply with them. He further stressed that:

> *We have various duties for each member, such as who is sent to sharpen the tools, who goes to buy food etc. Because I have less experience I do most of the jobs that need strength and carry out errands for the more experienced members, but we share the proceeds equally ((Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (24), Nyafoman, 13/08/14).*

While in most instances these rules and agreements were set by all members, they were sometimes established by the gang leader. The respondents in these cases asserted that it was he who stipulated the direction, guidance and job description for the gang, such as when to begin work, when to assemble at the site, which pit to work in, the duration of breaks and when to finish work. In an interview with a gang leader, he stated that he set the rules and directions for the gang, and after extraction and sale of the gold, each member received an equal share, though he got more. Though a couple of the leaders allocated themselves a larger share, this was not common. These leaders apportioned work based on each person's expertise and strength, so they justified their slightly larger share on the grounds that they performed a greater portion of the task, including setting rules, issuing commands and overseeing the activities of the less experienced members of the gang.

It would be misleading to suggest that adherence to the rules was straightforward, because galamsey miners notably disregarded every statute including the government decree against illegal mining. However, the gangs had a moral obligation to keep their internal rules, including a fair distribution of work, equal rewards and appropriate sanctions when the rules were flouted. Specifically, aside from the obligation to engage in equal tasks and receive equal rewards, the miners also agreed on how to share the rewards. Though gold miners in other areas preferred to share sacks of gold-bearing ore than to share the money earned from sales, the latter was practised in the Birim North District. There was a general agreement among the miners that after extraction, they would sell the gold to any of the licensed buyers or their sponsors and share the proceeds. Observations showed that after extraction, the gang trooped to the licensed buyer's office to ascertain the weight and how much they would receive. Upon enquiry, they stated that though they trusted each other, they were conscious of the fact that 'to err is human' and that they could be cheated out of their just rewards. Moreover, since they undertook every step of the production process jointly, they found it fitting to jointly engage in the sale of the final product. It could be deduced that as well as sharing in the drudgery of mining, being part of a gang lessened the burden on individuals, as they shared equally the possibility of uncertain proceeds. Interestingly, while the miners adopted English terminologies (e.g. "faraway" to indicate that everyone moves a certain radius away from a pit before blasting, or "scatter" to announce an imminent swoop by the security forces), their rules and regulations were conveyed orally, though

Gratz (2013) encountered a few gangs in the sub-region who had written down their rules and regulations, since it was not uncommon to find educated people operating as artisanal miners (see Hilson and Gartforth, 2013).

5.5 Relationships between Host and Migrants

The literature on ASM portrays the sector as a "migratory industry", and in the 1980s and beyond, Ghana witnessed an influx of migrants to ASM communities from all parts of the country and beyond. It is common to find a mixture of indigenes and migrants working on the same sites, as reported by several authors, including Heemskerk (2000); Hilson and Yakovleva (2007); Kamlongera and Hilson (2011); and Maconachie and Hilson (2012). Significantly, the influx of migrants into ASM communities often resulted in considerable changes to the landscape. The emergence of dual community types was very common, with the communities coexisting with new mining camps. Because these migrants, whether they came as a steady stream or a rapid influx, often lived within the community or on its outskirts, they needed to "negotiate their relationship with the indigenous community" (CDS, 2004: 22). This could range from harmonious, linked by mutual social and economic benefits (Nyame and Blocher, 2010), to conflictual, with perceived or real social, economic and environmental consequences (Avila, 2003).

However, migrants had no option but to establish a relationship with host populations, especially where mining sites were close to communities. The host population's reaction to them ranged from hostility to harmony, but in most situations the relationship was relatively amicable. While some members of the host communities had been resistant, more often than not these relationships were harmonious due to shared sociocultural characteristics and reciprocal benefits (Nyame et al., 2009). This was especially true where youth and women saw the economic gains in joining the migrants in galamsey. This section analyses the nature of the relationship that existed between the host and migrants, and that permitted the host to allow migrants to undertake gold mining on their lands.

5.5.1 Reciprocal Economic Relations

Ethnicity and origin were essential features of the relationship between artisanal miners and indigenous populations, especially in considering access to and acquisition of resources, both materially and socially. Because most migrants were ethnically identical to the host, this was less significant than their origin. However, the issue of access to land was critical due to its potential to make or break the relationship between host and migrant. While autochthonous rights (of, or belonging to, the community) has frequently been used to justify privileged access to the community's resources in mining fields across Africa, in the Birim North District being indigenous did not necessarily play a major part in access to sites. Neither host nor migrant had any legal claim to the land upon which a natural resource had been discovered, so that anyone who encroached on these resource-endowed lands was deemed culpable by law. In many parts of rural Ghana, and in

contravention of the law, the chief was traditionally seen as the custodian of the land and was considered the only person who could permit prospecting and exploitation of gold. Access was granted by the chief in the case of gold reserves found in the forest, and by the land owner (with the later consent of the chief) when it was found on privately owned land. Respondents indicated that access to the land was granted to both indigene and migrant, but on the firm understanding that the gold-bearing ore would be divided into three equal parts, with one going to the community.

Incidentally, in the early days of galamsey it was the youth of the communities, particularly in Noyem, who bitterly complained that the traditional leaders and land owners favoured migrants in the allocation of mining land. As 'sons of the soil', they vehemently opposed the unrestricted access granted to migrant prospectors. However, considering that migrants were more experienced in gold mining than indigenes, it made economic sense for the chief and land owners to allow them unfettered access to their lands, since they could give the community more in terms of the load than the indigenous youth miners could. Ghetto owners aligned with the chiefs, preferring migrants to indigenes as they stood to acquire more wealth from them.

Over time, this opposition diminished, but it did not vanish and there were still pockets of resistance and antagonism towards migrants. Indigenes established their relationships with migrants based on reciprocal economic affiliations. In an interview about their relationship with migrants, the indigenous miners stated that they cultivated good relations so they could learn the intricacies of gold mining, especially the construction and maintenance of pits, and "sample taking" and extraction of gold from the rocks. Importantly, they said that had it not been for the migrants, the gold and its rewards would still be untapped. It was the migrants, especially those from Achiase, Prestea and Obuasi, who trained them on prospecting and gave them experience in extracting gold from the rocks. Therefore, they tried to maintain a very good relationship with them. Also, they held that Accra, the capital city, along with most of the big cities, had expanded and become economically powerful due to the influx of migrants, and that this had given rise to the saying that "migrants are used to develop a community".[40]

Stories like these were common among the adult interviewees — some stated that:

> *The young men have found something to do. Most of them got involved in it and can now boast a more comfortable living than before. Also, most of the women were able to start a trade or vending due to galamsey. I am a testament to that. I started selling food to the miners and it is the profits that enabled me to build my house. Some leaders of the town who took the opportunity have also been made rich through it, as most of them have invested in the machines that the miners use. (Adult Interviewee (1), Chief's linguist from Noyem, 05/09/14).*

> *When galamsey commenced here more than half of the women were unemployed and depending solely on their spouses and families, to say nothing of the youth. There is*

[40] Tonah (2005) recounts similar reciprocal economic relations between Mamprusi hosts and Fulani migrants, based on the host entrusting their cattle to migrants, who are more skilled at herding due to their nomadic lifestyles.

> *hardly a youth in the community who is not engaged in galamsey either as a miner or performing one of the many ancillary services. This has stopped the outflow of youth from this place and has given them a livelihood. Now those depending on galamsey can boast their own houses, personal effects that were luxuries, and the ability to care for their families (Adult Interviewee (14), food vendor from Noyem, 15/09/14).*

The indigenous youth miners' responses were similar. However, they claimed that in the initial stages the presence of the migrants overwhelmed them, but because they lacked the experience to compete, they acquiesced and learnt the intricacies of underground gold mining. Also, they believed that while there could not be 'two masters', without cooperation there would be chaos on site and in the community, and time and effort would be wasted. Such chaos would attract the attention of the government and its taskforce, and galamsey activities would be halted. So, keeping a harmonious working relationship eliminated anxiety and was in the interests of both parties.

Another reason to keep the relationship relatively cordial was that before galamsey, people travelled regularly to other neighbourhoods, and either they or their children would migrate when the gold was depleted. They were thus mindful of how they treated the migrants, since they may become migrants themselves. A striking response from Yaw, an indigene, was that:

> *As a young man, I plan to travel outside the country. So, if I don't receive a migrant well here, I should expect similar treatment. I try to treat them with respect.* (*Interview, Host galamsey operator (16), Noyem, 13/08/14).*

He concluded that had there been jobs in the country, most of them would not have come to his community, clearly recognising that the fault was not with the migrants but with the government for failing to provide jobs for young people. However, respondents pointed out that the relationship depended on the nature and character of the migrant. Though they accepted them to a certain degree, they tried to treat migrants as individuals. One respondent reported that:

> *That person sitting over there is my close friend, but he is a northerner. We have been friends for over three years and those who don't know him might believe that we are related. But there are some of the migrants that we avoid. These are those who engage in all sorts of miscreant behaviours such as smoking of weed and causing allegation (*their way of referring to trouble*) (Interview, Host galamsey operator (16), Nyafoman, 16/07/14).*

Though a clear majority of the host population had established a pleasant relationship with the migrants, it would be far too easy to conclude that they all relished each other's presence. Some respondents stated that it was particularly difficult dealing with some of the migrants because they had their own set of rules and would not take any advice from them. Others also said that though they wished to maintain a pleasant relationship with the migrants, they were put off by their behaviour. They chose to distance themselves because of the migrants' notoriety for unruly behaviour, involvement in 'juju' (black magic) and the carrying of offensive weapons. Similarly, the migrant miners expressed some indignation towards indigenes, saying that working alongside them was

daunting, especially when they presumed that the land belonged to them. But they noted the importance of acknowledging their claim to the land and trod carefully when dealing them.

However, most respondents expressed enthusiasm about their cordial and interdependent relationship with the host. They described a warm relationship between migrants and indigenes, with mutual benefits. It was recognised that migrants had economically empowered community members by training them to mine gold properly, by sharing the load collected and thus contributing to the development of the community, and by reinvigorating dying businesses and engineering the setting up of new ones. Migrants had benefited from the communities in return, by being allowed access to the land, and some indigenes had shown them true companionship and taught them the ways of the community. Also, the respondents explained that because no gang had absolute control over a pit, they needed to cooperate, leading to relatively peaceful coexistence and better dividends. However, despite their generally positive disposition towards each other, they had different ambitions. While migrants wanted to accrue enough to start a business or some other venture, the indigenous miners were more content to live from 'hand to mouth'. These divergent aspirations appeared to undermine the relationship between them, with migrants seeming to prosper relatively well in terms of asset acquisition, and most indigenes experiencing no substantial changes to their lives. This migrant respondent's view resonated: "*there is no problem between community members and us currently, though I cannot say in the near future as the gold keeps diminishing".*[41]

5.5.2 Shared Social and Cultural Lifestyles

Although the relationship between host and migrant was centred on gold mining, it was not based solely on mutual economic benefits, but included a shared social and cultural life. While most respondents emphasised that the relationship was dominated by economic interest, this was in tandem with how they related towards each other socially, both on site and in the community. The relationship was forged through the development of diverse common interests leading to changes in the sociocultural lifestyle of each group. Though these adaptations were often skewed in favour of the host, with migrants adopting their sociocultural lifestyles, indigenous miners and young people in the communities often copied migrants' lifestyles too. This was mostly abhorred by elders and adults in the communities, but it had, in a peculiar way, reinforced the relationship as each side has learned to identify with the other.

Despite a mainly cordial relationship between host and migrants, it was observed that migrants preferred to live together because as well as creating a sense of attachment to a common place of origin and common experiences, it engendered a feeling of camaraderie, creating a 'we group'. Only Noyem had an enclave formed by migrants from Achiase, but over time this had expanded to include other migrants. Though the other communities did not have migrant enclaves, it was observed that

[41] Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (25), Nyafoman, 13/08/14.

migrants preferred to congregate in the same compounds. However, Edin et al. (2000) pointed out that while socially, migrants desire to live in enclaves, economically they fared worse compared to those who had integrated with the host community. Typically, as Edin et al. (2000) noted, the Achiase enclave was a commune of disordered, dilapidated and unsightly structures, with virtually no public amenities. Similarly, it was observed that while those who lived among the host community related better with them and were more amenable to strangers, those in the enclave were withdrawn and shunned any intrusion into their space.

5.5.3 Mutual Assistance

Another factor that contributed to the relatively harmonious relationship between host and migrants pertained to mutual assistance. Hardship and poverty, coupled with the uncertainty of discovering gold, often led to financial difficulty, with most miners periodically having to rely on others for assistance. Fear of the unknown meant that both migrant and host miners related well to each other and also to the non-mining host population. It was thus not uncommon to find migrants offering their services without charge to the host. For instance, during a visit to the farm of the chief's linguist in Noyem, a number of migrant women were found hauling logs for him. He said that they were doing this at no charge. Evidently, the migrants occasionally undertook such tasks to reinforce their relationship with the community. Some of the informants claimed that they formed such strong and strategic bonds as a leverage to gain more resources than they could get on their own. Performing such tasks, especially for opinion leaders and influential members of the communities, meant that firstly, they became known to the community, and secondly, the community would assist them in an emergency. The rendering of these services placed a burden on the recipient, who was expected to reciprocate. As an example, when some miners were arrested by the police, the elders in Noyem vouched for those that they knew. They were released, while the others had to call relatives back home to bail them. Thus, in a bid to improve their image in the community, more than 75 percent of respondents stated that they tried to undertake community activities including communal work, and also made contributions to funerals and development projects.

The young men also formed relationships around mutual leisure and interest pursuits. If they had a fruitful day's work, most of them congregated at the various drinking spots dotted around the communities to drink, dance and chat heartily amongst themselves. While this indulgence had influenced the negative perception of artisanal miners, it had invariably facilitated strong social integration.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored in greater detail the 'what', 'how' and 'who' of the ASM sector, and more specifically how the actors related. From evidence gathered through observation and interviews, I presented a detailed description of how galamsey was carried out in the District. It has demonstrated

that galamsey was a setup of mutual interaction between migrants and indigenes. I, then, turned attention to the migrants, specifically youth and showed that they have significantly contributed to the burgeoning of galamsey in the District. Aside from showing that the majority of these young migrants had migrated close to the District, it has established that their migration was a rational decision precipitated on factors including poverty, unemployment and a lack of interest in agriculture. Also, it showed that though females have rarely been recognised as galamsey operatives due to several socioeconomic and cultural prohibitions, there were a sizable number of them. The majority were migrants, who played diverse roles in galamsey, though these were marginal to the men. Furthermore, it has argued that while undertaking their operations, the miners banded together as gangs, which were the basis of long standing relationship. Being part of a gang, to a large extent, determined their success as galamsey miners and provided a source of companionship to repel feelings of solitude. Finally, critically analysing the relationship between the host and migrants, it has presented that it was largely cordial. Aside from the fact that this harmony was based on reciprocal economic relations, I illustrated that it was also based on shared sociocultural lifestyles and mutual cooperation and support. In the next chapter, I analyse issues related to conflict in galamsey with emphasis on host-migrant conflict. For a superficial observer, the analysis so far would seem to suggest that there were no issues of conflict, but in the next chapter I provide evidence of the pervasiveness of conflicts in galamsey and prove that a majority of these conflicts were based on host-migrant differences.

Chapter Six

Host-Migrant Conflict in ASM

6.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I illustrated the structure of ASM in the Birim North District and highlighted the relationship that existed among a gang of migrant miners and between them and the host. I showed that in the past two decades ASM has been gradually replacing agriculture in the communities where gold has been found, and that importantly, the ASM economy was characterised by the interplay between the host and migrants. I went on to examine relationships within this heterogeneous setting, and concluded that the miners, banded together as gangs, have largely survived in this unregulated and chaotic environment because of mutually supportive relationships. Lastly, I established that the host and migrant had a symbiotic relationship based on the perceived and actual mutual benefits of coexisting and working together.

However, the reality did not appear to entirely match this impression of a harmonious relationship. In this second empirical chapter, I examine conflicts within galamsey, with particular focus on host-migrant conflicts. Using data collected from semi-structured interviews, FGDs, key actors, and personal communications, this chapter addresses question 4 (see p. 5). It is divided into four sections. The first examines the perceptions of youth miners and some adult members of the host communities. This is intended to provide context for conflicts arising from differences and misunderstandings. This section also analyses contributory factors such as competing claims to mineralised plots, the absence of formal rules and the lack of clearly defined rights. With reference to the literature, the second section critically analyses the triggers of host-migrant conflict. It focuses on an examination of economic and sociocultural issues that lead to hostility. The third section focuses primarily on an in-depth interview with one of the first migrants to prospect for gold in the district, who has progressed from operative to pit owner and who currently holds a small concession. Rather than merely describing the participants' activities, this section allows understanding within the broader context of the life experiences of Master Ayuba. I explore how the complexities of galamsey have shaped and influenced his time as an operator. With particular emphasis on the influence of conflict issues on his decisions, the account specifically shows how he became involved, how he has been affected and how, as a successful migrant artisanal miner, he has managed conflict. This account is compared with evidence from other respondents within the same context. The fourth and final section presents a comparative overview of the two main types of mining taking place in the Eastern Region, and how each elicits conflict differently. Highlighting several key factors, the section explores conflict dynamics in relation to underground (pit) mining and surface mining, the two predominant types of mining taking place in the Region.

6.1 Galamsey-Related Conflicts in Context: A summary of Respondents' Perceptions

To the artisanal miner and to the non-mining host population, the discovery of gold in the district could not have come at a more opportune time. ASM has provided artisanal operators with better benefits in terms of jobs, wealth and sustainable livelihoods compared to traditional occupations. In the communities, especially in Noyem and Nyafoman, there was no doubt that most people had benefitted from galamsey, particularly youth and women. The increase in wealth was evident in the houses, shops and other businesses that people had established. Also, the women had taken advantage of the increase in population to set up restaurants and other trading stalls, while increases in migrants and in wealth have meant the construction of more homes. Respondents were clear about the positive impact of galamsey and migrants. The majority of them claimed that before the communities became a magnet for migrants due to galamsey, they frequently travelled to Nkawkaw, the nearest big town to purchase consumables, access health care and basic facilities such as making and receiving phone calls. Presently, they occasionally make such trips, despite the increase in transport services, due to the fact that these goods are made available to them by retailers from the major towns in the Region. The forward and backward linkages had been far reaching and had seen a significant increase in developments in the communities. There is a health post in Noyem, a police post in Akoase and two mobile telecommunication masts in Noyem and Nyafoman to facilitate easy communication.

> *Galamsey in this community has had its positive effects. When we were growing up, this place was very tiny, you could even circle the community in half an hour, but the migrants have brought much change here. The community has expanded. Also, the community has benefited immensely, some have acquired plots, put up houses and others have bought their own cars (Interview, Host (6) Galamsey Operator, Noyem, 27/07/14).*

> *Generally, I don't believe that migrants coming into a locality have any effect on community facilities. It is when they come in large quantities as it happened here. However, the only facilities here that were greatly affected were the waste disposal sites and toilets. But their presence because it increased the number of people also brought major changes in the community, including the expansion of the market, lots of houses springing up and increase in transport services (Interview, Host (9) Galamsey Operator, Noyem, 27/07/14).*

However, ASM had led to disputes and conflict (USAID, 2004), and in Ghana, it had been linked to a 'raft of problems' that "pits citizens against one another" (Kane, 2013: 1). These were not only environmental, but included conflict, increased social vices, deviant behaviours and disrespect for authority. While mining stakeholders believed that the main problem of ASM was its environmental consequences, the miners and community members disagreed. With all the mining sites in the district located away from residential areas, their main concern was not about the environment, but about conflict and the way it was used to demonise them. While most conflicts had been related to gold

mining, predominantly about borders, access to pits, cheating and differences between the miners and the local mining committees, there were also the 'everyday' altercations that occur in any society.

Respondents suggested that while conflict was an integral part of human interaction, it was particularly rife in galamsey because its transitory nature, and the mix of socio-cultural backgrounds, potentially increased friction. The following excerpts illustrate respondents' perceptions of galamsey-related conflicts:

> *Galamsey activities have brought a lot of disputes into this community. It is very natural that where there are lots of people the friction will increase and this will invariably create conditions for conflicts. (Interview, Host (13) Galamsey Operator, Noyem, 29/07/14).*
>
> *There have been a lot of conflicts because of galamsey. When galamsey started in this community, hardly a day passed without reports of conflicts either on site or in the community. Though conflicts in the community have reduced greatly, it is still a frequent occurrence at the sites. (Interview, Host (19) Galamsey Operator, Nyafoman, 14/08/14).*

Before the discovery of gold around 2005/06, the district was generally peaceful. Then it was suddenly inundated with people, from the experienced to first-time miners, all of them struggling to find a place to mine. Most host respondents agreed that the influx of galamsey migrants resulted in a high incidence of conflict, and that these newcomers were mostly troublemakers who dabbled in illegality with impunity.

> *Disputes are very common in galamsey. It's seen as part of galamsey. Lots of people say that galamsey miners are ill-mannered, malicious and very dangerous people. That is very true because galamsey involves lots of people with very different background and dispositions, and certainly there is bound to be a clash of interest, which will lead to scuffles and conflicts. (Interview, Host (9) Galamsey Operator, Nyafoman, 24/07/14).*
>
> *We don't know how the news got out. We had all sorts of people from ex-convicts, troublemakers, weed smokers, etc. But on the whole, most of those who descended on this community were troublemakers. Hardly a day went by without one hearing of a fight here or a commotion in another area. The community was just overwhelmed by their presence. (Adult Interviewee (2), Kente weaver, Noyem, 08/09/14).*

Table 6.1: Summary of a range of causes of galamsey-related conflicts

Sources of galamsey-related conflicts (as mentioned in the interview)	% Respondents who referred to the issue (n=80)
Conflict arising because persons are not from the communities	35
Illicit behaviour of migrants	7
Disagreements between migrants and local mining committees, for instance over the share of load	10
Disregard of local practices and taboos	2
Petty crimes and stealing of tools and 'loads'	22
Misunderstandings related to the nature of galamsey	14
Problems over access to pit	24
Long exploitation waiting period	6
Perimeter/boundary-related	24
Failure to pay for supplies or services rendered	10
Non-adherence to site's rules and regulations	22
Amorous affairs	4
Use of force by host	7
Encroachment on lands and farms	18

Source: Author's field data 2014

Table 6.1 shows a diverse range of responses to the perceived causes of pervasive conflict. Each respondent gave multiple responses, summarised as a percentage. About 35 percent indicated that most conflicts arose because migrants had come in vast numbers to exploit the host's resources. A popular saying among the host community was that their *"navel is from here"*[42], meaning that they were sons and daughters of the soil and should enjoy unhindered access to mineralised lands and gain greater profit. However, because of their limited experience, their earnings lagged those of migrants, which spawned greed resulting in rampant conflict. Other issues cited included perimeter conflicts (24%), non-adherence to site rules and regulations (22%) and stealing of tools and 'loads' (22%).

Typically, the majority of galamsey-related conflicts took place at the sites, but they were carried over into the communities from time to time. Occasionally, conflicts within the communities had been gold-related, but the majority were the common domestic disputes with neighbours which occur in any community. However, conflicts were pervasive due to the substantial increase in population. The majority of the conflicts being galamsey-related, as seen in Table 6.1, which periodically spilled over into the communities, did not only give galamsey its undesirable image but also depicted the communities negatively. One respondent noted that

> *…on every 'breaking day' it was as if there was a frenzy in the community. The conflicts were many and some very violent, involving the use of cutlasses and other working tools. (Adult Interviewee (9), Former load carrier from Nyafoman, 09/09/14)*

[42] Interview, Host galamsey operator (5), Noyem, 23/07/14.

The following sections connect emerging field evidence with the literature and highlight the key elements that deepen host-migrant conflict.

6.2 Triggers of Migrant-Host Conflict: The Emerging Evidence

Despite the increasing momentum in discourse on migration-related conflict, an important question has failed to attract scholars' attention: What are the triggers of conflict after migration? Some authors, including Nyame et al. (2009), have mooted the idea of a symbiotic relationship between galamsey miners and communities in Ghana; and this may appear to be so, with perceived mutual benefits and with galamsey miners being treated as a homogenous group. However, migrants often outnumber the host population (Ababio, 1999; Anarfi et al., 2003), and this has the potential to change the dynamics between host and migrant.

In analysing conflict, the literature distinguishes three factors: structural factors; the triggers or catalysts; and the manifestations. This study, and particularly this section, focuses on the triggers or catalysts of conflict. Over the years, there have been attempts at elucidating the causes of intergroup conflict; however, the findings have been varied and most explanations are incomplete. For instance, Lake and Rothchild (1996) concluded that intergroup conflict was caused by apprehension and fear of the future, with violence resulting from groups' strategizing on how to protect themselves, and that this bred distrust and polarised goals. In another study, the main reason for conflict was given as the marginalisation of one group in relation to another (Tigno, 2013). However, Yaro et al. (2011) found both conclusions very simplistic, and identified six principal triggers of intergroup conflict. This section distinguishes two broad categories of economic and sociocultural factors. A synthesis of the factors identified in Yaro et al. (2011) into two broad categories is to enable direct links with the theories selected for this thesis. To recount section 3.3, emphasis is made that the theories adopted for this thesis converged at Collins' three dimensions of resources (economic, power and cultural). However, in this section, power or status and cultural triggers of intergroup conflict are combined under one subsection.

6.2.1 Economic Basis

Earlier theories that conflicts between groups were inherently ethnic or religious have been discounted, and economic factors have been recognised as the main triggers of conflict in Africa. The growing resentment against migrants in many sub-Saharan African states arose from socioeconomic and political problems, and economic competitiveness was acknowledged as one of the main causes of conflict between migrants and host populations (Peil, 1971). Violence against migrants was not new in the West African sub region, with rampaging mobs accusing migrants of stealing jobs and causing economic problems, attacking them and destroying their properties. The general level and intensity of violence experienced by migrants in these circumstances were extreme, and a similar fate befell migrants in the Birim North District, although it pales in comparison. However, each side held

the other responsible for the numerous conflicts, both on the sites and in the communities. Migrants blamed indigenes for insisting that the land belonged to them, that they had rights to it, and, for that matter, that they should have control over the migrants and what they did on the land. However, indigenes denied unjustifiably attacking migrants, but acknowledged that they were frustrated by their large numbers, which, they claimed, suppressed them and crowded them out of their land. Autochthones, as indigenes were commonly called, strongly believed that a definite and unequivocal right to gold-bearing lands and pits was their heritage, and that in no circumstances should they have to compete for resources. They expressed anger at the traditional leaders who tolerated migrants and allowed them unrestricted access to gold-bearing areas. This was expressed in a view shared by one of the respondents:

> *An issue that made indigenous youth agitated was the perception that the chief backed the migrants or didn't care when an issue involving a migrant was reported to him. They felt that because of the money the chief, elders and committee were making from the galamsey miners, they were reluctant to exact a stiff punishment on migrants. Thus, they demonstrated against the authorities, then directed their aggression on the migrants, casting insinuations and aspersions against them. (Adult Interviewee (13), farmer from Nyafoman, 15/09/14)*

However, migrants were an easy target, as competition for space often led to misunderstandings and disagreements between the two groups. Yaw, a trader-turned-galamsey-miner, noted that though most migrants would concede in a confrontation with an indigenous gang, some, especially those from Achiase and the North, would not, and that this frequently degenerated into threats and fisticuffs. In turn, migrants accused the host of intentionally insisting that pits were not the exclusive right of any person or gang. Ostensibly, while this dictate was intended to avoid indigenes being severely disadvantaged when migrants, with their superior skill and experience, discovered prosperous pits, the former abused this and forcibly evicted migrants from these pits. However, host galamsey miners attributed the deterioration in the relationship between the groups to the unrestricted access that ghetto owners gave to migrant miners over indigenes. Rationally, ghetto owners preferred migrants to indigene gangs because the latter occasionally refused to hand over a third of their load as stipulated, and because the migrants could ensure a substantial increase in their earnings. Rather than vent their frustration on ghetto owners, indigenes saw migrants as the cause of their inability to gain preferential access to the pits. The indigenes saw migrants as formidable competitors and a threat to their chance of extracting more gold. Rather than confronting the ghetto owner, they saw migrants as the source of threat: a group that limited their chance of succeeding. They, thus, resorted to the use of hostilities to ward of the source of the threat. The analysis concurs with the postulation made by Esses et al (1988) that competition for economic resources led to intergroup conflict as the ingroup perceives the outgroup as a source of threat.

Additionally, the economic relations between host and migrant was characterised by deep-seated suspicion, often leading to hostilities among landowners, sponsors and migrants. Initially, landowners,

especially cocoa farmers, and sponsors looking to make a profit, released their lands and provided funds to experienced migrants, despite galamsey miners' notoriety and scheming tactics. However, over time, indigenes' suspicions were confirmed as the benefactors realised that they had been cheated out of their share or that the migrants had relocated without informing them.

Below is the view of a 62-year-old retired teacher from Noyem:

> *Because we didn't have any clue about gold mining, we entered into a working partnership with them (migrant miners), but they ended up cheating us. I owned a pit, as most indigenes do. But because I was still teaching, I entered into an agreement with some of the migrants, but I realised too late that they had cheated me of several thousands of cedis (Adult Interviewee (12), retired teacher from Noyem, 11/09/14).*

For example, in Noyem reports of cheating and widespread suspicion of migrants caused an eruption of conflict, with young men in expressing disgust at migrants from Konongo 'freeriding' and taking their benevolence for granted.[43]

Despite migrants contributing positively to the economy, they were blamed in periods of economic depression, even though the host may be gaining more in terms of wages and security. While they were welcomed for their perceived benefits, the welcome did not last when the influx resulted in intense competition for scarce resources and fewer opportunities for the host.[44] As the competition became more intense, especially in times of resource depletion, the host tended to vent frustration on migrants. Following the boom in galamsey activities in the District, there had been a significant decline in gold production in recent times, due partly to the large numbers of artisanal miners and partly to the inability to dig deeper than their rudimentary methods would allow. Evidently, this increased the intensity of competition among the gangs for those pits (termed as "*Mother*"[45]) laden abundantly with gold deposits, and indigenes used brute force to evict migrants, pitting one group against the other. Similarly, the relatively high cost of living, coupled with the decline in gold production, led to a subtle hatred for anything galamsey-related, especially from the non-mining host. Migrants were blamed for the communities' problems, including the high cost of living.[46] However, the migrants held that because the host fully participated in galamsey, they were equally to blame and should shoulder part of the responsibility. Clearly, migrants had been unfavourably stereotyped, unduly suspected as the cause of the negative happenings in the communities and even blamed for the high cost of living. As stated by Bobo (1983), the hostile and prejudicial attitudes towards the outgroup was because they were seen as a threat to the ingroup. Indeed, while not many indigenes had

[43] In these instances, the victims may not be the actual culprits but may be caught in the crossfire due to the fact that they are migrants and they are lumped together.

[44] Swain (1996) and Brancati (2007) also conclude that conflict is inevitable following an increase in competition for scarce resources. Similarly, an earlier study of host-migrant relations in Ghana, Peil (1971) found that migrants were welcomed as a valuable labour force critical to the growth and development of the country, but were later vilified as a drain on the economy.

[45] The miners call these pits Mother because they believe that whatever the situation or however many people work in it, like an earthly mother, it constantly provides for its children.

[46] The high cost of living was witnessed in relative high food prices compared to neighbouring non-mining communities.

been victims to the machinations of these migrant miners, the perception that they were cheats and conniving had been prevalent, such everyone believed it and tagged migrants unfavourably.

Furthermore, the literature showed that the relationship between host and migrant may become conflictual when migrants seem to succeed in periods of economic decline. While this had not been a permanent feature in the country, a few migrants mentioned that the host had misinterpreted their success as 'showing off'.[47] The migrants felt that, though some of the host population appeared to be doing well, they generally resented migrants' success. One respondent recounted coming home to find that his room had been set ablaze by unknown persons, whom he suspected to be indigenes irked by his acquired wealth. Master Ayuba recounted a similar story in which his gang was successful in a pit previously unsuccessfully mined by indigenes, and this increased hatred towards them. This eventually culminated in a fight and the expulsion of some migrants from Noyem. However, it should be noted that resentment against migrants was premised not just on the display of wealth, but on the fact that such ostentatiousness was shown during periods of economic hardship or when indigenes seemed to fail despite the fact that migrants succeeded under similar conditions.

While economic relations had largely been the cause of violence between the host and migrants, the literature pointed to two main factors precipitating conflict. Firstly, on one hand, economic relations between hosts and migrants could be harmonious when the host believed that interactions with migrants could be mutually beneficial. On the other hand, these relationships became conflictual where there was intense competition between the host and migrants, and could be very antagonistic when the host derived no meaningful benefits from migrants. Secondly, if the relationship was conflictual or antagonistic, it was unlikely to be initiated by migrants. Evidence showed that relations were harmonious when both groups benefitted from galamsey, and that they became antagonistic when one group felt that the other was scheming to gain more. However, though the literature pointed to the fact that migrants were unlikely to initiate violence, respondents cited several counterexamples, including conflicts about frontier/boundary intrusion and misunderstandings between migrant miners and committees.

In conclusion, given the underlying forces at play in host-migrant relations, it would be very simplistic to assume that competitive economic relations alone accounted for conflict. These were a necessary but not always sufficient condition, without other triggers playing a part. Subsequent research showed that migrants were perceived not just as an economic threat, but also as a significant sociocultural threat to the host community (Weiner, 1992). Discussing the causes of conflict in contemporary times, Sen (2008) noted that it would be a travesty to subject the causes of conflict to "economic reductionism", and explained that together with causal economic factors, a link must be

[47] In northern parts of the country, Fulani migrants who prospered relative to their Mamprusi host were envied, especially by young farmers who were facing hardship. The situation was intensified when the migrants visibly displayed ostentation (Tonah, 2005).

established with "factors such as nationality, culture and religion". This clearly suggests that factors including sociocultural ones, coupled with economic determinism, provide a better explanation of the causes of conflict. Similarly, as well as adding environmental degradation to the equation, Richard (1996) emphasised the roles of cultural clashes and competition for resources in the conflict in Sierra Leone.

6.2.2 Sociocultural Basis

6.2.2.1 Prejudice and Romantic Relationships

The literature placed prejudice and discrimination as significant triggers of host-migrant conflict. More often than not, prejudicial tendencies and opinions were formed based on preconceived feelings or mere hearsay, even before the relevant facts were known. The problem of prejudice, discrimination and intimidation was that they spawned violence and conflict between social groups, especially between indigenes and migrants. Importantly, identity had been central to prejudices, with a distinction being made between those who belonged to one's group and those with different social identities. This was reinforced when established status and valued identities were threatened by changes caused by a substantial influx of migrants.[48] The argument holds that whenever migrants were viewed unfavourably by the host, this negativity had the potential to fuel conflict against them.

While migrants to the district were not significantly victimised, they had typically been lumped together without reference to their individuality, and were labelled as troublemakers and polluters, and as disorderly and conflictual. They claimed that they were tagged as disrespectful, as drug addicts (or '*junkies*') and as taboo breakers, and that when a few migrants committed a crime or distasteful act, the indigenes directed their anger towards the group as a whole. In Noyem, because the migrant enclave, Achiasefomo, was close to the river, they were blamed for polluting and desecrating the abode of the river goddess Aprokuma. During the community's durbar,[49] the plea that only a small section of migrants was responsible was met with uproar and suggestions that migrants should be banished from the community. There is no doubt that instead of the Noyem community finding the individual culprits who were responsible for committing misdemeanours and punishing them, all migrants who live in the enclave were differentiated because of their salient category and deemed culpable as postulated by the Social Identity Theory (SIT). Though, there were some indigenes who were living in the enclave, due to ingroup loyalty they were not considered as part of those who for instance polluted the river Aprokuma. As predicted by SIT, people identified with the group such that members of the ingroup do no wrong in any circumstance which involves members of both groups. This concurs with the study by Card et al. (2005) that migrants were unfavourably targeted as the

[48] A submission has been advanced that dominant indigenous groups not only rejected migrants because they perceived them as competitors, but more critically when they were seen as challenging their status and position in the socioeconomic and political sphere (Diez-Medrano, 2010) .

[49] A community durbar was held in Noyem to deliberate on issues affecting the community. Paramount among the issues discussed was the desecration and pollution of the River Aprokuma.

perpetrators of crime, especially in periods when crime is on the ascendency, though actually migrants were committing less crime.

It was claimed that such prejudicial tendencies against migrants were rife in Ghana, and that they commonly had to settle on the outskirts of host communities (see Yaro et al., 2011). Even where in recent times migrants were found in central locations, especially in urban settings, the enclaves were originally built on the outskirts, with the general community expanding over the years to envelop them. In Noyem, the only community with an enclave, respondents were not able to pinpoint exactly when and how it was formed, but a popular narrative suggested that the community leadership deliberately relocated migrants from the centre of the town. According to a former assembly member, this was partly due to their large numbers and partly to protect the community, especially its children, from unruly behaviour. Presently the Achiasefomo[50] enclave was located in the central part of Noyem, since the original settlement had expanded to envelop it. Despite its proximity to the main community, its social conditions were deplorable. Additionally, while there were clear benefits for migrants choosing to live in the enclave, there was an equal potential for xenophobia, contempt and hostility from the host.

The literature suggests that negative feelings and opinions about migrants depended on their numbers.[51] However, findings from fieldwork showed that the sudden influx of migrants from all over the country and beyond had not produced any overly negative feelings among the host population. Host respondents indicated that though they were surprised and overwhelmed at the numbers, they were more than willing to have the migrants since they saw their arrival as an opportunity. Respondents claimed that it was not the numbers that fuelled conflict, but rather the intense competition, the migrants' ruthlessness and the increase in social vices.

An adult member of the host population expressed reservations why migrants were far richer than indigenes, though they were all doing similar jobs. He claimed that despite coming with nothing, some had been able to build houses back home, while others had acquired assets and established profitable businesses. Only a few of indigene youth had managed to do this. For this respondent, this was only possible because the migrants were devious cheats who profited at the expense of indigenes and the community. The host population generally believed that migrants should achieve less and have lower socioeconomic status. Therefore, when migrants seemed to succeed and became influential in the community, they were resented and labelled unfavourably. It was not surprising that when migrants seemed to succeed during periods of hardship while indigenes failed to thrive, they were commonly framed as deceitful, robbers and involved in clandestine activities.

[50] The name Achiasefomo was changed during the community durbar to Aprokuma, after the river goddess.

[51] Epstein and Gang (2010) believed that hostility becomes greater when the size of the migrant population increases substantially. Also Diez-Medrano (2010) noted that media rhetoric and public protestation against migrants was due to the perception of an increase in the "wave of immigrants", further assuming that "the size of immigrant population has a major influence on the host population's attitude towards them" (Ibid: 3).

Another issue was that of romantic relationships between migrants and hosts, particularly between male migrants and female indigenes.[52] While it would seem simplistic to suggest that hosts and migrants engaging in intimate relationships could spark off conflict, Yaro et al. (2011) claimed that it was possible when female hosts increasingly favoured migrant men. Though it was noted during the course of the fieldwork that most migrants, especially those from the three northern regions, had relocated with their women, there had been clashes over relationships between male migrants and female indigenes. A retired teacher in Akoase explained that 'girl-related' issues were a prevalent source of conflict:

> *Let me tell you, every girl likes a foreigner (*migrant*), and because of the wealth of these galamsey miners, the girls usually snubbed the young men here and went after the migrants. And no man will allow his girl to be snatched by a migrant. There were several fights over this, but they were mainly between individuals or just involved a small section of youth (Adult Interviewee (12), retired teacher from Noyem, 11/09/14).*

Despite intimate relationships being natural and common, they were contentious, especially when migrant males and indigene females were involved. Young men from the host communities argued passionately that migrants were allowed to compete for gold, but that their women were out of bounds. Reiterating earlier comments, they were clearly not enthusiastic about their women engaging in intimate relationships with migrant men. They did concede that the young ladies were enticed by the migrants' standing and relative success, and so their anger was directed at the migrants who they perceived to be taking advantage of their vulnerable women. The indication was that these young men were seeking to protect the females in their communities, however, in recapping Esses et al. (1988), they rather sought to eliminate a source of threat by making sure that contact was reduced between migrants and them.

It was not only young men who were against these relationships; some adults were also unhappy about them. An adult respondent, a food vendor, who along with others had been able to build a house with the profits she had gained from galamsey, recounted her abhorrence for migrants:

> *My personal regret about galamsey is the loss of my daughter because of a migrant. She was in her final year of junior high school and I heard she was in a relationship with one of the migrant galamsey miners. It was when she died that I found out that she got pregnant and someone gave her a concoction to terminate it. By the time word got to the family and me, the boy had vanished. Nobody knew his real name, or they refused to tell it, and he was referred to only by his nickname. No-one could even tell us where he came from. To make matters worse, a couple of weeks after her death, her examination results were released and she had passed with flying colours. There is nothing that can dissipate my grief for her. There have been a number of*

[52] In a study of the region from almost five decades ago, Garlick (1967) found that romantic relationships between indigenous Akyem women and migrant Kwahu traders resulted in the expulsion of the migrants from Akyem lands. Incidentally, while the people of Kwahu stopped their women from trading in Akyem lands lest they entered into relationships with the men, the "Kwahu men had their way with Akyem women". This infuriated young men in Akyem and led to the Okyehene expelling the migrants from his land.

such deaths among the teenage girls in the community (Adult Interviewee (14), food vendor from Noyem, 16/09/14).

6.2.2.2 Protection of Self-Interest

To protect their own interests, indigenes criticised everything migrants did based on the notion that in the end they would return to their areas of origin, leaving them to mop up the negative effects. Personal communication with members of the unit committee in Noyem revealed that the community, especially its leaders, disapproved of the migrants erecting unsightly shanty-like lodgings, and that this had been a source of agitation between the groups. Spurred on by some of their leaders, indigenes united against migrants, believing that they deliberately refused to invest in better housing, that they repatriated their earnings, and that they often showed no allegiance to the community, so they had no need for permanent structures.[53] While it is a true the majority of migrants did not believe in investing, especially in housing, in the host community and lived in deplorable structures, there were some indigenes who were also living in similar conditions. However, the leaders seem not be concerned about the shanty-like conditions of their own people, but concentrate on the structures erected by migrants. This is in harmony with the tenets of SIT.

An earlier demolition in Noyem was met with fierce resistance from migrants, who questioned the leadership's audacity in organising such an exercise. The community believed that it would save the cost of demolition and clearing of any health and safety hazards when migrants eventually left. The chairman of the unit committee said:

> *Whether it was wilfulness or an 'I don't care' attitude, I don't understand how a human being can live in those conditions. The whole place is unkempt and filthy and if I got the required permit, I would break those houses down. We don't expect mansions, but at least the houses should be decent and built of cement blocks (Personal Communication, Unit Committee Chairman, Noyem, 25/07/14).*

Proceedings at the community durbar showed how the leadership rallied the community against migrants 'on the other side', indicating the Achiasefomo enclave, and also against landowners who released their plots to them. The excerpt below demonstrates the call for the community to deal decisively with the illicit and unacceptable conduct of migrant miners:

> *... the kind of behaviour that goes on in Achiasefomo is a disgrace and doesn't speak well of us. How can we allow the sale and use of weed and other illegal substances on our land? I know that some of us are in league with the migrants and benefit from them, and don't care if such behaviours are perpetrated. How can we develop this community with such attitudes? Also, I have witnessed that some of our youth and children also indulge in such practices and this doesn't augur well for the future of this community. The community should therefore rise up against such indecent acts and punish those who collude with the migrants to serve as a deterrent to all and sundry (View from Community Durbar, Noyem, 25/07/14).*

[53] While such a stance was likely to breed host-migrant conflicts, Swain (1996) asserted that elites, particularly in developing states, had manipulated and highlighted ethnic or racial differences by forming groups to protect their flagging interest.

A task force was formed to patrol the migrant enclave, with the power to reprimand migrants or summon them to the chief's palace for sanctioning if they continued to erect unsatisfactory structures and indulge in forbidden acts. There was no indication that the communities in Akoase and Nyafoman had rallied against migrants, and respondents there said that they were yet to witness the problems observed in Noyem. This was because migrant numbers there were relatively small, and they lived within the community.

6.2.2.3 Cultural Basis

> *There are several issues, such as the migrants disregarding our customs and going to the sites on breaking days, encroaching on people's farms and abusing drugs. It is because of galamsey that we are having these conflicts (Interview, Host galamsey operator (18), Ewinso near Noyem, 13/08/14).*
>
> *The issues that generate a fracas between migrants and indigenes could be anything, but because it involves a migrant and an indigene it turns into a brawl. Issues like cleanliness and observance of customs such as breaking days can incite a migrant-indigene conflict if the perpetrators are from both sides (Interview, Host galamsey operator (21), Akoase, 27/08/14).*

These express the views of the host, indicating that the flouting of cultural practices was a source of agitation, where migrants were either not conversant with the practices or did not accord them much importance because of cultural differences. One issue that frequently arose was the observance of the 'breaking day'. Among Akans, one day, either 'Fofie'[54] or 'Daapa'[55] was set aside for spiritual cleansing and the worship of deities. On these days, it was taboo to go to the farm, and inhabitants spent the time on general cleaning and communal work (Agyekum, 2006).

In contemporary times, this taboo had been extended to include any activity carried out in the farms and forests, including galamsey. The people of Noyem, especially those mining around and beyond the River Aprokuma, observed Friday as a breaking day, while those from Nyafoman adopted Tuesday as their sacred day. These days were used for communal work such as clearing bush paths and waste disposal sites and holding community meetings. On one such breaking day during the fieldwork, I got involved in the digging of a pit latrine in the Noyem community, and I witnessed the various activities in all three communities. Similarly, I was privileged to be invited to a community durbar in Noyem and to participate in a meeting organised by the galamsey committee in Nyafoman. It was noted that some non-Akan migrants, particularly those from the three northern regions, persistently flouted the community's taboos, and that this led to tensions and hostilities. For their part, the migrants said that they migrated to make money and thus a day lost meant lost earnings. Some were emphatic that because they were not from these communities, the directives should not apply to them. While those who contravened the taboos were in the minority, all migrants were labelled as violators of traditional customs and practices, and the repercussions were visited on them

[54] Transalted in English as Sacred Friday
[55] Translated in English as Ssacred Tuesday

all. Invariably, non-allegiance to the host community had been cited as one reason for indigenous people attacking migrants. They were seen as enjoying the spoils of their land while disobeying dictates because of having no ties to the community, and as being quick to abandon the community to another when the gold became depleted. Though this sentiment was not limited to the district, the host population's overwhelming passion for their history and culture was clearly evident in their criticism of migrants who contemptuously disregarded their heritage. Indeed, as groups come together, it is expected that their respective cultures will clash. Acculturation stipulates that the groups will live harmoniously if each accept the changes that take place or coexist under conditions characterised by tension and hostilities when they are in disagreement with respect to the changes in their way of life. Clearly, the source of conflict was the disagreement between the host, who expected migrants to adapt to their culture, and migrants, who felt that they were only in the area for a short period and did not need to observe the customs and practices of the host.

Also, despite some of the migrant artisanal miners displaying different cultural traits, this was not the cause of hostilities.[56] Instead, they were subjected to contempt and discrimination, including name-calling. For instance, those from the North were dubbed 'Ntafo' or 'Pepefo'. While even some of the Northerners themselves did not find this overly offensive, Lentz (2006) indicated that the term meant 'barbarian' and was a derogatory term for Northerners, especially for the Hausas. Over time, the northerners had adopted it and even referred to themselves as 'Pepefo'. However, some of the migrants noted that while this in itself did not offend them, the tone in which it was used could be insulting and detrimental. It was the circumstances that determined whether or not the reference was derogatory. Those from other areas were typically referred by their area of origin, so that it was common to hear Achiasefo[57], Konongofo, Odafo, and so on, or galamseyfo. While, as with the northerners, this may not in itself be offensive, it was the intonation that conveyed whether or not it was accusatory. Most respondents were generally called by their names or nicknames, but were referred to as galamseyfo or Odafo and so on when being accused of a misdemeanour.

6.3 Key Elements of Host-Migrant Conflict: Respondents' Perspectives

This section critically explores key elements of host-migrant conflict from the perspectives of a diverse range of miners. Some of these were embedded in the previous section and are discussed in more detail here.

6.3.1 Community Protest

Community protest was the first kind of dissent witnessed in the district in the initial stages of galamsey. Two kinds of protest took place. The first involved those who were against mining in the communities and came from a section of adults, typically farmers and landowners who were angry

[56] Authors including Esses et al. (1998), Caselli and Coleman II (2006) and Sniderman et al. (2004) hypothesise that cultural distinctiveness leads to increased hostilities against migrants.
[57] The *fo* at the end of the locality means 'people' or 'group', so 'Achiasefo' refers to people from Achiase.

that galamsey had been allowed. However, rather than directing their anger at the miners, they confronted the chiefs and elders; this was particularly true in Noyem. Though they were aware of the level of deprivation and unemployment, these dissenters, made up of opinion leaders, retired teachers and leading farmers, felt that the leaders had not learned from the negative experiences of communities in the Western and parts of the Eastern Regions. They were particularly worried about the state of education, with primary school pupils becoming truant in favour of galamsey. According to a retired teacher, then in active service, she took responsibility for preventing her pupils from working in galamsey, but the ostentatious lifestyles of the miners, compared to the tediousness of the classroom, enticed them.

The second protestation was from the youth and unemployed, who felt that they were not benefiting from the discovery of gold and were angry with both migrants and community leaders. They resented strangers being allowed to exploit their resources without benefiting the community; however, a migrant respondent stated that:

> *It was ironic for the youth of the communities to benefit from gold mining as at the inception, they had no experience unless they understudied us (Interview, migrant galamsey operator (51), Nyafoman, 24/07/14).*

Though not common, disputes ensued between indigenous youth and community leaders, and this was the case in Noyem. Interviews with indigenes revealed that despite the local mining committee collecting a share of each miner's and gang's load and proceeds being earmarked for community development, these funds were not being put to good use. After constant appeals and demands for accountability from the committee, the youth staged a demonstration and security agencies had to intervene to quell the disturbance. In a similar situation in Agyapoma, perpetrators were from a section of the community who wanted to capitalise on the lack of accountability to depose the chief.

Apart from protests from the host population, a significant number of respondents reported early conflicts among migrants. Socio-cultural differences and intense competition often led to conflict behaviour, often in the form of brawling between migrants from Konongo and those from the North. While there were conflicting accounts of what started the fight, most respondents said that it began when a gang from the North failed to sound the call "faraway" to make sure everyone had vacated the pit before igniting the dynamite. The ensuing argument escalated into a violent clash involving weapons such as chisels and hammers. It reached a crescendo when inhabitants from their respective areas joined in. However, conflicts among migrants were few and rarely violent. This could be because over time, they had come to consider themselves as a unit.

6.3.2 Competing Claims to Access

In the previous chapter, I held that trust, mutual respect and a sense of belonging were essential to relationships among gang members. However, the solidarity experienced within the gang was a separate issue, unlike the relationship between the gangs (Bryceson and Jonsson, 2010). Miners were

wary of the potential for rivals to access mineralised lands, and this often led to hostility and conflict. The complex nature of the land tenure system in Ghana had generated a series of conflicts over access to gold-bearing lands. As Nyame and Blocher (2010) acknowledged, chiefs and members of their communities clashed, heads of families were confronted by angry kinfolks, and local landowners had occasionally been attacked by youth, all over releasing land for galamsey.[58] Young people in the Birim North District felt that the traditional leaders and heads of families were eager to release communal lands to migrants more from their own self-interest than for the general good of the communities. For instance, while chiefs favoured migrants for the expected financial returns, Noyem went a step further and leased its gold-bearing lands to foreign business entities, potentially crowding out indigenes. A similar situation was observed in earlier studies in the agricultural sector, especially in the Kwahu and Akyem areas, where the youth resented the chiefs for releasing communal lands to migrants, often expressing their discontent by protesting, and they successfully dethroned some of the chiefs (see Amanor, 2006; Mitchell, 2012).

Also, the parallel nature of the state and traditional structure in relation to land ownership often led to clashes between migrants and indigenous miners. By law, all mineral-bearing lands were automatically the state's property, but traditional authorities customarily held vested rights to these lands and, according to Nyame and Blocher (2010), often traded them. The power of traditional authorities in galamsey communities was illustrated in this excerpt from a dialogue with the youth opinion leader in Noyem:

> *The right to mine is vested in the chief. If an individual wants to exploit the gold, they have to seek the permission of the chief. Even the landowners will have to consult with the chief before they can use their land for galamsey (Personal communication, Youth opinion leader, Noyem, 25/07/14).*

Occasional conflicts had arisen between artisanal miners and the host community, especially with the chiefs and elders, over payment for land. This was primarily because of the overlap and interrelatedness of state power and traditional authority, which, according to Jonsson (2007: 4) made "direct competition over access …. crucial to these conflicts". Ample evidence was found during field studies to confirm this:

> *Yes, this usually involves contestation over who has control over the sites. While the migrants feel that the land belongs to the government once gold is found on it, the indigenes also believe that they have a bona fide right to the land. This has generated a lot of tension between the two (Interview, Host galamsey operator (17), Nyafoman, 13/08/14).*

[58] For instance, Mitchell (2012: 1) found that the complex land tenure system often flared tensions and "conflicts between indigenous and migrants, chiefs and citizens, youth and elders, and between family members" depending on the boom and bust witnessed in the cocoa sector of the country.

Except for a few sites which were located on individual farms,[59] the vast majority of the mining sites in the three communities studied were in the forest. Tensions arose because on one hand, migrants believed the land belonged to the government once gold has been found on it,[60] especially when these lands were the concessions of Newmont Mining Company. Migrants held the view that they were both undertaking an illegality and no one apart from the company or government could exercise authority over the land. On the other hand, the indigenous population, notably the traditional leaders and indigenous miners, claimed bona fide rights according to their heritage.

> *Competing over rights to land and pits are the most common contentions in galamsey. Galamsey workers do regularly encroach on lands without asking for permission. Once they know that they can trace gold to that land, they will occupy the land in numbers. This has generated a lot of conflicts between the miners and the landowners and the chief (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (20), Nyafoman, 13/08/14).*

However, in most situations, after they had been confronted by the host, migrant miners had gravitated towards partnership and harmony in their common interest.

In addition to disagreements over vested rights, there was also a significant rise in tension among the communities over who had an ultimate claim over the gold-bearing lands in the forest. Though the majority of the lands from Akoase to New Abirem were concessions of the Newmont Gold Mining Company, they released the lands to the communities upon petition from the state. However, without any clear demarcations, the communities had intermittently attempted to control mining activities in the forest by imposing their committees on the sites. This occasionally caused confrontation among the communities and threatened the peace and stability of the district. Currently, Nyafoman had a major stake in the main sites, and their authority had occasionally been challenged by the neighbouring communities. During the fieldwork, tensions reached a peak between youth from Adadekrom and the committee from Nyafoman over the division of the load and the impositions of the latter. However, open confrontation was averted when the sites were closed and the chiefs of both communities found amicable solutions. Noyem was not involved in this because as well as controlling rights over part of the contested forest, it had another site beyond the River Aprokuma which it had leased out to an outside business concern (the Agudea Small-Scale Mining Company), but which was intermittently used by its inhabitants.

Before they were relocated to the forest, conflicts over encroachment were prevalent. The galamsey miners prospected on lands without authorisation from the owners, and if gold was found on it, they would occupy the land before the landowner became aware. Otherwise, they would abandon the 'pit dotted' land. In the process, the migrant miners were involved in several altercations with landowners over the destruction of crops and farms. One respondent said:

[59] Cocoa farms were initially targeted by the artisanal miners before the raid by the security agencies and the subsequent push into the forest.

[60] Most migrant miners know that what is on the land belongs to the landowner, whilst what is beneath the land is for the government and, they claim, "who is the government? Every Ghanaian".

> *Fortunately, or unfortunately, gold in these parts is always found on cocoa farms and the encroachment of these farms has generated a lot of conflicts between the farmers and the miners. Because it was the migrants who had experience in prospecting, they were always at the forefront of these conflicts with the farmers (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator, Noyem, 14/08/14).*

Also, there were indications that their large numbers and unlimited access to the communities meant that the miners, who could not wait for their turn in the pits, invaded farms and any land they deemed to be potentially gold-bearing.[61] Invariably, after successful prospecting, indigenes joined migrants. However, after years of galamsey with its relative benefits compared to farming, most landowners would readily trade their lands either for a fee or for a third of the load, with the latter more common.

It is also worth noting that most farmers resented the use of their farms as access to the mining sites. Because the current sites were located beyond individual farms, the farmers had often complained about persistent thefts and the destruction of crops as the miners passed through daily. According to the respondents, the farmers had occasionally reacted, but not violently.

6.3.3 Usage Rights Conflicts

Generally, it was expected that the individual or gang who dug the pit, discovered the gold 'layer' and started first exploitation was accorded usage rights, "assuming the person(s) had access to all necessary technical and financial means" to undertake exploitation (Gratz, 2002: 6); this has been witnessed in several galamsey communities in the country and in other West African states. However, this appeared not to be the case within the Birim North District, where the pits were under the tenure of the ghetto owner, with rights conferred by the landowner or the mining committee in the case of galamsey in the forests. As such, any individual or gang that sunk a pit on a ghetto owner's parcel had no claim over the pit and all rights were reposed in the latter. Also, only the ghetto owner could instruct a miner or gang to undertake prospecting and/or exploitation of the plot. Conflicts had ensued from misunderstandings between parties, with most migrant artisanal miners thinking that once they started sinking a pit, it automatically belonged to them.

> *We all have the same rights in galamsey because any land that gold is found on belongs to the government and not the people. But there are times when the local people feel that they have more rights than us and this has led to conflict (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (13), Akoase, 01/08/14).*

Though the reason for this arrangement was to permit indigenes, with their limited experience, to benefit from the exploitation of gold, migrants had nevertheless felt slighted by it. This was especially so as disputes were usually settled in favour of the ghetto owners, who were usually indigenes.

A similar type of conflict arose when abandoned pits were restarted by another miner or gang. Though the field visit showed several such abandoned pits, only the ghetto owners could grant temporal usage

[61] During the fieldwork, I was shown a farm where the owner had erected hoardings to ward off any encroachment on his land. According to the miners, they had traced the layer and were emphatic that it went through the farm.

rights of the pits to anyone. The agreement in this case may involve a fee payment or share of the load till the pit reverted to the ghetto owner. However, in most cases, these pits had been restarted without due recourse to the owners, who surfaced only when the pits became productive. Often these conflicts had emerged between migrants and indigenes because the former may, knowingly or unknowingly, fail to seek the consent of the ghetto owner (an indigene). In most such cases, the load was seized, and this frequently resulted in quarrels on site.

Conflicts also arose over waiting periods. A ghetto owner would allow as many gangs that the pit could accommodate within one exploitation cycle, and gangs always preferred to work in a prosperous pit rather than to start a new dig. Therefore, due to the large number of gangs compared to the number of prosperous pits available, they had resorted to working in turns. After a period of exploitation, a gang may have to wait for about two days before it could gain access to the pit. Serious conflicts had erupted when indigene gangs, rather than waiting for their turn, had forcefully entered or ejected those already in the pits.

> *At the sites, instead of waiting for their turn, indigenes have at times made reference to the fact that the land belongs to them, have forced their way into the pit and evicted migrants from the pit. Some migrants have resisted because they believe that the land belongs to the government (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (44), Pankese near Akoase, 19/09/14).*

These forceful entries had not just been made by indigenes; known rogue migrant gangs had also intermittently used brute force to evict miners from pits. While weaker migrant gangs would generally acquiesce, indigenous gangs often stood their ground, with ensuing scuffles.

6.3.4 Territorial/Boundary Rights Conflicts

Within the pits, temporary territorial rights were granted to the gangs, and these usually lasted till a gang completed a cycle of exploitation. Two types of conflict emerged despite this. Commonly, a gang had sole control of a particular spot (phase) or pit, but in most cases such delimitations were not observed. Respondents noted that conflicts over access to pits had increased recently. Despite the stipulation that no gang had sole claim to a pit or a spot within it, there were frequent clashes over who had ultimate access. Gold deposits were scattered, and only a few pits had gold in significant quantities, so that competition for them increasingly resulted in clashes among miners. In most cases, the gangs, especially indigenes, flouted the 'first come, first served' rule and used their size and strength, citing their autochthonous right to the pits. Though knowledge, information and experience were critical, the success of an artisanal miner's career depended on access to mineral-rich land (see Bryceson and Jonsson, 2010). Competition for the best pits and spots had generated many violent conflicts among all miners, with migrants opposing migrants, indigenes opposing other indigenes, and migrants opposing indigenes. The latter case was most intense.

> *In Prestea, pits belong to the gangs and they reserve the right to allow others to enter, but a different scenario exists here. Pits belong to the ghetto owners and any gang can enter any pit they choose. This creates a lot of rivalry and indigenes have taken*

advantage of that to force migrants out of the best pits. They can because the pit belongs to no gang but importantly, because the land belongs to them (FGD with migrants, Noyem, 12/08/14).

Another type of conflict related to territorial rights occurred when pits merged, with a gang in one pit digging into the demarcated portion of another. The pits were dug close to each other and because territorial rights were demarcated at the top of the pits, it was fairly common for two or more pits to converge and for disputes to arise, especially when the area was thought to be very rich. Respondents indicated that because demarcations were made at ground level and operations were undertaken underground, gangs had frequently dug into adjoining pits or demarcated sections. It was difficult to trace demarcations within the pits, and so gangs occasionally clashed, sometimes very violently. While this type of conflict was common to all the miners, it was generally most intense between migrants and indigenes, with the latter insisting on their autochthonous rights.

6.3.5 Load-Sharing Disagreements

Load-sharing disagreements were also reported as a frequent type of conflict which occurred between the committee and the miners. The generally agreed rule was that each stakeholder received a third of the load. For example, if the total load of a gang was fifteen sacks, the committee would take five, the landowner or ghetto owner got five, and the remaining five sacks went to the miners. However, disputes had arisen between the committee and miners when the former had laid claim to more than the agreed share. While the miners felt that they had undertaken the hard work and were entitled to even more than was allocated to them, the committee arrogated to themselves more powers than were permitted and cheated the miners of the appropriate share.

It was agonising and hurtful, when after we had bought tools and dynamite for blasting, and worked all day or night in the pit, for the committee to take whatever share they desired. The agreed share was in three parts, but usually the committee would want to overstep that and try to take more. This lead to heated arguments (FGD with migrants from Akoase, 01/08/14).

Although a few of the miners challenged the committee's authority, most acquiesced because the committee had the power to grant entry and expel them from the mining sites. Participants in an FGD with migrants domiciled in Akoase believed that the committee took this arbitrary stance because they knew that the miners, especially migrants, had little say. When they stood up to the committee, they were told to freely leave the sites if they could not abide by their mandates. Similarly, in a bid to outwit the committee, some operators hid part of their load, and this often resulted in scuffles. Ordinarily, after mining the committee would inspect the load and take its share before it was transported to the machine sites. When a concealed part of the load was found, the entire load was confiscated, occasioning brawls. These were usually referred to the chief for resolution.

6.3.6 Lack of Rules and Clearly Defined Rights

A popular narrative that has been used by the authorities to justify the eviction of artisanal miners from concessions and community lands is its lack of well-structured rules and guidelines.[62] Rules and regulations are critical in averting violence and conflict, and the lack of them within galamsey is a concern for stakeholders. However, when galamsey began in the Birim North District, despite there being no clearly defined rules or regulations, the miners were guided by arrangements and guidelines transferred from their previous sites. The leaders of the mining committees in both Noyem and Nyafoman said that the communities were initially so overwhelmed by the sheer number of migrants that they could not react in time to institute firm rules. The ensuing haphazard nature of digging pits, misdemeanours and chaos eventually culminated in a raid by the security agencies. Among the three communities, Noyem suffered the brunt of the raids and was the first to institute reforms. After the security agencies left, the chief of Noyem and the leaders embarked on measures to provide supervision and resolve all misunderstandings and conflicts on the sites. These included prohibiting galamsey within the communities and forming mining committees mandated to ensure that peace and security prevailed on site. They were also given additional powers to collect a share of the load on behalf of the community, to be used for development projects. The function of the mining committee was to demonstrate to government and media that galamsey could be profitable and responsible under a leader or governing body. Below is a view expressed by a member of the mining committee.

> *For galamsey to be recognised as a good business, with its ability to employ several youth and engage others in ancillary services, there has to be a leader. The truth was that galamsey all over the country lacked strong and efficient leaders, and this accounted for the various arguments between the government, communities and operators. For instance, in the course of their work if an accident occurred, who was the leader, who would make the report to the authorities? There was no one, unlike in the small-scale mining, where the authorities knew the leaders and were able to liaise with them when any unfortunate incident took place (Personal communication, Member of committee, Noyem, 23/07/14).*

This opinion reflected a felt need of the communities, especially its leaders, who recognised that there were many advantages to forming a committee, including the appeasement of those who initially opposed galamsey and the averting of the government's decision to halt it. Currently a chain of authority had been set up, with the committee, as administrators of the sites, ensuring that gangs had authorisation from land owners and ghetto owners before accessing the sites. Unwritten agreements were in place: gangs worked in the pits for no more than half a day (12 hours); they adhered to a 'first come, first served' system for access; and the committee received its fair share of the load. Following Noyem, Nyafoman also constituted its committee. Despite the institution of the committee and the

[62] A contrary view is that the literature has been superficial in portraying the sector as deficient of rules and regulations, and that the sector, like any other informal sector, exhibited "clear rules… and is [much] organised" (ARM, 2013: 8).

implementation of rules and regulations, disputes and clashes were not totally averted. Indications from respondents showed that artisanal miners had come to accept conflict as part of galamsey. In a self-fulfilling prophecy, galamsey miners had always been thought of as villains and as mischief makers, and this negative image manifested in almost every site that they relocated to. Alidu, a seasoned migrant miner, noted that:

> *Aside from the observance of first come, first served and other unofficial traditions in galamsey, the committee has laid down rules and regulations for all. However, galamsey miners are noted for their notoriety and this tend to follow us everywhere we go. Conflict is part of us no matter the number of rules that are applied (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator, Akoase, 27/08/14).*

Almost all the miners said that they only adhered to the rules and regulations outside of the pits because of the committee. In the pits themselves, these rules were hardly observed. For instance, it was commonplace for gangs to use their strength and stature to stay in the pit longer than permitted and to bully others into acquiescence, with consequent conflicts among the miners. They commonly said that rules were made at the top, but difficult to implement in the pits because the committee was not present there.

Despite the imposition of rules, the vast area covered by the mining sites made it virtually impossible for the committee to exercise absolute control, and their absence provided fertile ground for gangs to engage in all sorts of recalcitrant behaviour. No doubt the miners were blamed for lack of respect for the rules and regulations at the sites, an assertion reiterated by a majority of the respondents, who noted that what galamsey needed were impositions and commands. Some of them believed that the committee should be held responsible, not only for failure in eliminating conflict, but for flaunting the very rules that they were supposed to uphold. The arbitrary division of the load was one of the examples given. Others believed that the chiefs in the communities, as custodians of the communal land, should be the ones to bring order to galamsey.

6.4 In-depth Interview with Master Ayuba in Nyafoman

Born in Savelugu near Tamale in the Northern Region, 36- year-old Master Ayuba had been engaged in galamsey for the past fifteen years. As one of the few successful galamsey operators, he had advanced from working in the pits to owning a small concession, with several people working for him. He currently lives in Nyafoman but has a galamsey concession in Takroasi, a hamlet on the outskirts. Having had his education curtailed in 1994 by the Konkomba and Nanumba conflict, he went into farming but abandoned it after a year. He then moved to join an aunt, who together with her husband was involved in galamsey in Tarkwa. After a couple of months in Tarkwa, he became involved, mainly driven by the motivation to save enough to become a shopkeeper. Lacking a complete education, he could not aspire to formal employment and hoped to save enough to buy a shop, but:

…after a while I came to the realisation that the earnings of galamsey far exceeded what I could earn as a shop owner, so I abandoned the idea of the shop and undertook galamsey as my main occupation (Personal communication, Master Ayuba, Nyafoman, 22/09/14).

This launched his career as a galamsey operator.

6.4.1 Life in the Birim North District: The Ups and Downs

6.4.1.1 Sojourn and Conflict in Noyem

Due to persistent raids by the security agencies, Master Ayuba moved to Prestea, Nzema and Nkrofu with the gang (all from the North) that he had joined. In 2005, they heard that gold had been discovered in New Abirem and its environs and that the Newmont Mining Company was recruiting workers.

It spread like wildfire considering that we were farther into the Western Region, but we still heard the news. Yes, it was true that mobile communication had emerged, but how many people had mobile phones then? But we still heard the news and packed our stuff and headed directly to Noyem.

They relocated, not to look for work with the new mining company, but work on its fringes. His account was substantiated by several respondents, including Shatta (a nickname), who arrived almost at the same time with his gang after they had heard rumours of significant quantities of gold in the district. He recounted that:

Almost everyone was here. Those that I had worked with in Tarkwa, Prestea and the other places all descended on Noyem. Though the neighbouring communities later discovered gold in significant quantities, the melting pot of galamsey in the district was Noyem. People from all walks of life and characters, occupations and aspirations migrated here (Personal Communication, Shatta, Noyem, 30/09/14).

In the latter part of 2006, the first full-scale conflict broke out between some of the migrants, mainly Northerners, and the youth of the community who felt that the latter had come to take over their area and exploit what belonged to them. Master Ayuba noted that:

We were forcibly ousted, but Akoase and Nyafoman accepted us. I moved to Nyafoman in September 2006. The conflict was planned because we were resented by the community due to our success. When we got here, there was a pit that had been used by the indigenes but because they lacked the experience in galamsey, especially in maintaining the pit, they stopped working in it. After consulting them, they agreed to hand over the pit to my master for a fee. We maintained the pit and started digging. After some time, because we were making money, the owners came asking for a share, but we refused. Thus, they resorted to working during the night when we had closed. We laid watch one night and caught them red-handed and confiscated their loads. The 'town boys' (youth) were infuriated and pounced on us. We stood our ground and fought them. The matter was brought to the chief, but because of pure envy, they asked us to leave the community (Personal communication, Master Ayuba, Nyafoman, 22/09/14).

Though disputes occurred frequently among the miners and also with some members of the communities, this was the first major group hostility between migrants and host, which culminated in the expulsion of migrants, especially those of northern descent. Master Ayuba's account of how the

conflict started was strongly contested by indigenous respondents, who claimed that it was migrants' attempts to dominate galamsey and indigenes' attempts to exercise their rights that led to the clashes. The Okyeame[63] of Noyem, Agya Kojo, indicated that:

> *…. because the migrants came as gangs, they were able to use their numbers to suppress the 'town boys'. The youth felt that this was their land and they wouldn't allow their rights to be trampled upon, thus they organised themselves and stood up to the migrants. It was a serious and intense brawl (Personal communication, Okyeame, Noyem, 24/09/14).*

After several appeals to the chief and community leaders failed, they had no option but to leave. The escalated tensions in the community compelled most of those from the north to settle in Akoase, but Master Ayuba's gang decided to relocate to Nyafoman. He said that conflict and the subsequent eviction from Noyem resulted in an ethnic divide in the migrant population, with Akans staying put in Noyem and northerners relocating to Nyafoman and Akoase. He stated:

> *In most of the places that I have been to, a pit belongs to the miner or gang and no one is allowed to work in it unless permitted by those who started it. However, here in Akyem, due to jealousy and greed, they have decreed that a pit can be mined by anyone so that when a pit is deemed rich, their people will use force to evict us migrants from it (Personal communication, Master Ayuba, Nyafoman, 22/09/14).*

While not discounting this statement, because he was also involved in a couple of minor scuffles, Shatta reported that though galamsey operators were regarded as rabble-rousers, they were largely allowed to carry on their activities. He reiterated that eviction of migrants happened specifically to persistent offenders or those who stood up to community leaders. He believed that Master Ayuba and his group were evicted not only because they alienated themselves, but also because they insisted on their rights.

> *There is virtually no way that a migrant will have the same right as an indigene. This is their land, so they have an advantage over us in that regard (Personal Communication, Shatta, Noyem, 30/09/14).*

6.4.1.2 Residing in Nyafoman

In Nyafoman, they were warmly received by the chief and elders; Ayuba attributed this to the community having witnessed the vibrancy of developments in Noyem and were eager to get a share. According to Ayuba, the community leaders entreated them to bring to bear their expertise, and gave them unlimited freedom and access to the forest. Encouraged by the warm welcome, he decided to settle permanently and consolidated that by building his house. He was now in the process of completing a second one.

Soon after settling, he split from his gang to form his own, and after consultation with some of the elders, he was allowed to prospect at Takroasi, a hamlet belonging to Nyafoman. Though he had faced some challenges as a pit worker, life as the owner of a small concession was daunting. However,

[63] Okyeame is an Akan name for the spokesperson of the chief or linguist. In the Akan tradition, subjects do not speak directly to the chief but through the linguist or Okyeame.

together with his gang, he landed on the gold-bearing 'layer' and had been mining successfully for seven years, despite having to invest in lots of machinery such as water pumps (due to the proximity of the water table) and an industrial generator for lighting and operation of the milling machines.

6.4.1.3 Recurrence of Conflict and Preventive Measures

While agreeing that migrants had more experience than indigenes, he noted that engagement and cooperation between the two groups would be good for both miners and the community, smoothing the relationship between them. He consents that indiscipline and greed had caused the problems in Noyem, and that a similar situation was gradually emerging in Nyafoman. For instance, at his present site, though he claimed to have signed an agreement with landowners and the chief, with them taking a third of the load and he two-thirds, someone else had come forward to claim ownership and was insisting that he vacated the land. Even the intervention of the chief had not deterred this person, who Ayuba believed was backed by some community opinion leaders. He vowed never to yield to their force unless the claimant reimbursed him for all the money he had spent, because he had invested a lot of resources (both financial and human) on the site. *"Thus, the situation that occurred in Noyem can reoccur if all efforts to reconcile fail"*[64]

Though the local mining committee was a step in the right direction, Ayuba noted that they had been their own worst enemy. The committee and its various task forces had allowed indiscipline to overshadow their actions. To Ayuba, they were more interested in collecting loads and swindling the community of its share than in ensuring proper controls on the site. Furthermore, in dealing with conflicts, they practised favouritism. Though conflicts were inevitable in every human situation, he was of the view that the committee favoured their own people when resolving issues between migrants and indigenes.

Ayuba opined that the spate of conflict could be reversed if an association of galamsey miners was formed. He suggested that:

> *It is because we are not one or there is not an association that aside from bringing us together has sought our welfare, maintained control over the affairs on the site or has been able to liaise with government or the district assembly on our behalf. That is why galamsey is wracked with problems and there is a lack of proper recognition from the government. For instance, the association should be able to dictate that when a pit is abandoned for a period, say 3 or 6 months, the next occupant is seen as its owner (Personal communication, Master Ayuba, Nyafoman, 22/09/14).*

He disclosed that their attempt to form an association failed as the government was more interested in dealing with community leaders than with the miners. But when the government gave the community

[64] Personal communication, Master Ayuba, Nyafoman, 22/09/14.

jurisdiction over some of the lands, instead of allocating it to gangs, they sold or leased it to businessmen and foreigners.

"Galamsey is our job and life, it is what we are experienced in and have done all our adult lives, that is why galamsey workers always return to the site despite raids by the police", he stated. To him, galamsey could be a proper, responsible and profitable venture which could be passed on to the next generation and could benefit a wider range of people than other forms of mining. For instance, with the same concessions allocated to large and small-scale mining companies, galamsey provided employment for thousands of people in addition to the benefits to the community and to the country. This compared favourably with what the various mining companies had done over the years. He expressed the need for the government to listen to them, stating that:

> *…the government should talk to us and put us under one umbrella (association). This will be to the benefit of all the stakeholders – miners, landowners, community, government etc." (Personal communication, Master Ayuba, Nyafoman, 22/09/14).*

6.5 Host-migrant Conflict in Galamsey: A Comparative Overview between Different Types and Locations of Galamsey

In the Eastern Region, diverse kinds of artisanal gold mining that took place, dominated primarily by surface, underground (pit or deep), and alluvial mining. While the previous chapter had explained in detail the nature of underground mining, which was mainly practiced in the Birim North District and a few other communities outside the district, the other two types, surface and alluvial, were also carried out in the region. Surface mining, locally termed as "Swagum"[65] was predominant in communities in the East Akyem Municipality, namely Apapam, Adadentem, Asiakwa, Kwabeng, and the outskirt of Ayninam, with the exception of Agyapoma, which undertook a combination of underground and surface mining. Surface mining involved the use of excavators to clear a vast section of the land, after which the ore containing earth was heaped and manually passed through a wooden sluice to extract gold. The alluvial type of gold mining usually occurred on a riverbed or banks of rivers; however, this method of mining was less preferred by communities due to the excessive damage to and pollution of rivers.

While many of the communities in the Region were not new to gold mining, the current state of artisanal mining has been overwhelming. However, between the two favoured mining methods, the manifestation of conflict was distinctively different. Fundamentally, several factors accounted for the pervasiveness or lessening of conflict based on the method of mining.

[65] English translation of Swagum is carry and dump.

6.5.1 The Ownership of Land

Land ownership under each of the mining methods was different. In the East Akyem Municipality, where surface mining was dominant, the gold bearing land was leased or sold outright to an individual or business concern. The decision as to what to do with the land or when to start mining rested with the purchaser. Though mining was illegal, there was some extent of legitimacy due to the consent of traditional authorities and, in some cases, government functionaries, who had been identified as fronting for some of these investors. Land ownership was, however, significantly different among practitioners of underground mining. Hardly was the land sold; the landowners, traditional rulers or their representatives allocated portions of the land to ghetto owners to sink their pits. However, in some communities, the landowners also doubled as ghetto owners. The artisanal miners chose which pit to work in depending on the sample quality and gave a third of their 'load' to the ghetto owner, who then shared his accumulated 'load' with the landowner. With the surface mining method, the procurer commanded the sole prerogative of whom to allow or disallow onto his title, thus limiting the element of conflict as the responsibility rested with the owner and therefore, the miners did not have any authority.

However, the circumstances under the pit mining were different. Due to the fact that none of the miners owned title to the land, the risk of conflict was potentially high as they struggle to secure the best pit deemed to be laden with gold. In the Birim North District, despite a litany of pits, only a few of them were considered rich and attracted hordes of gangs. In such sought-after pits, it was not uncommon to find more than 30 miners crouched and working at a time, with many more awaiting their turn. The competition to access pits or encroachment on demarcated portions often led to conflicts. Similarly, those waiting for their turn had been known to express their impatience, especially when those in the pit stayed far longer than was permitted. Not to be outdone by a competitor, the contested environment had been prone to conflict.

6.5.2 Bearer of Financial Responsibility

In any business entity, the bearer of primary responsibility had a say in how the activity was undertaken and by whom and this influenced conflicts in diverse ways. The bearer of responsibility for surface mining as found in the East Akyem Municipality was the owner of the concession. He hired and dismissed at his own discretion as well as bore all the losses and gains that he accrued. As the concession owner, he also bore the cost of hiring machinery, payment of royalties and other ancillary expenditure. The galamsey miners were his workers, working from 8 am to 5 pm and paid at the end of the day or week. The miners assumed no responsibility for the success or failure of the business as such were not competitors to engender conflict. With underground mining, the gangs literally incurred the cost of operation, including blasting materials, tools, payment of load carriers, machine cost and so on. Unlike surface mining, losses or gains were borne by the gang, which practised underground mining. Thus, if they recognised any opposition to their chance of earning a

livelihood, they resorted to violence to remove the source of the threat. In some circumstances, the miners received funds for their operation from sponsors and to meet their obligations, artisanal miners had adopted conflictual behaviour to remove any competitor that prevented them from redeeming the loans.

6.5.3 Prevalence of Migrants

Galamsey is largely a migrant dominated activity and communities which had discovered gold were inundated with migrants from every part of the country. Communities in the Eastern Region had not been spared of the invasion of migrants after the region was considered to have gold in commercial quantities due to the siting of Newmont and a myriad of small-scale mining companies. Migrant galamsey miners preferred to be their own bosses and would relocate to communities in which the opportunity existed for them to work on their own and for themselves. The existing arrangement in the Birim North District was much favoured by migrants as they had the opportunity to make their own decisions and manage their own affairs. The subsequent influx of migrants increased the possibility of competition often eliciting confrontations and hostilities among migrants and between host and migrants. Miners shunned communities in the East Akyem Municipality due to their inability to make their own choices. There was less competition and the incidence of salience was greatly reduced, which limited host-migrant conflict.

6.5.4 Size of Artisanal Mining Population

Recent studies examining the interrelationship between conflict and population assert that population growth did not actually cause conflict; rather conflicts arose due to particular changes in population density (Thayer, 2009). A UNFPA report prepared by Prof. Nazli Choucri illustrated how population growth coupled with conditions such as acute scarcity of natural resources increased the propensity of conflicts. Galamsey triggered a net immigration of the active labour force in mining communities which resulted in imbalances in the demand and competition over economic resources. These imbalances created the risk of conflicts among stakeholders in the artisanal mining sub sector. Information gathered in the East Akyem Municipality indicated that galamsey was mainly undertaken by indigenes who left with no option of ever owning a concession, had resorted to work for those able to acquire title to mineralised lands. The incidence of conflict was greatly reduced as migrants shun mining communities in the Municipality. However, migrants preferred to move to the Birim North District due to factors such as easy access to land without making any initial payment, the ability to make their own decisions and choices as well as manage their own affairs. Consequently, the swell in the artisanal mining population increased the risk of conflict. In the Birim North District, conflict was endemic as a result of the huge numbers involved in galamsey (see Banchirigah, 2008). Secondly, an increase in the size of the population made up of indigenes and migrants resulted in a flux of myriad sociocultural traits, aspirations and mannerisms. With behaviours that were unfamiliar to the host and other migrants, tensions and hostilities increased substantially in the communities. For instance, in

Noyem the host not being able to recognise the sociocultural traits of migrants as well as decipher the agency of the galamsey youth had framed them as "ex-convicts, troublemakers, wee-smokers etc.". Migrants were constantly blamed for offences and crimes that took place in the community and this had fuelled resentment against them.

6.5.5 Consent of Traditional Authorities, Opinion Leaders and Community

Contravening the Mineral and Mining Act 2006, Act 703, traditional authorities in mineral rich resource areas often usurped the power of the state by illegally selling or leasing such lands to prospective mining individuals and establishments. Indeed, no ASM activity could be undertaken in a community without the authorisation of the chiefs and in some cases, government officials and functionaries, who had been implicated in this 'illegal' act. However, because chiefs were custodians of lands, holding it in trust for its people, they had often faced the opposition from its citizens, especially opinion leaders and youth. Discussions held with artisanal miners in the East Akyem District indicated that galamsey was fully backed by the chiefs, supported by the community and backed to a large extent by some government agents in the district. As such agitations and hostilities had been at its barest minimum. In the Birim North District, however, there had been intermittent opposition against the chief and galamsey. In the initial stages of galamsey in the communities, especially Noyem, a section of the adult population vehemently opposed the chief and his elders for allowing galamsey. The youth had also demonstrated against the chief for allowing migrants' unfettered access as well as not properly accounting for proceeds accrued from galamsey. Though a large section of the community was in favour of galamsey, the minority had incited the community against migrants, especially whenever a crime or misdemeanour was committed by a migrant. Periodic attacks had been carried out against migrants, leading to maiming and the destruction of property. Overall, communities in which sections of its inhabitants protested against galamsey was at a malleable risk of conflict.

6.6 Conclusion

Despite anecdotal evidence obtained by Nyame and Blocher (2010), and recently by Mitchell (2012), to suggest a generally harmonious relationship between artisanal miners and the communities, the analysis has so far shown that conflict was endemic within the artisanal mining sector in the District. However, the question was about whether these conflicts were based on the dichotomy between migrant and host. Illegal mining all over the world is noted for its highly competitive nature in relation to access to mineral resources, and this has often led to conflict. The general acknowledgement among respondents was that galamsey was largely conflictual, with the migrants' exploitative drive frequently clashing with the community's interest. Internecine conflicts were generally a part of life for miners in the district, as migrants and indigenes competed over "territorial rights of exploitation" (see Gratz, 2002).

> *In the past, conflicts were frequent, especially as the members of the community felt they had the bona fide right to the land and would want to mine only the rich gold-laden areas. (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (4), Noyem, 23/07/14).*
>
> *In this community, competition for mining sites has been between owners of the land and all the miners, not migrants alone, and has been quite frequent. However, while most of the indigenes will usually seek permission from the landowners before embarking on any prospecting, the migrants will do the reverse; undertake the prospecting before seeing the owner of the land. This is what brings about the conflict. (Interview, Host galamsey operator (9), Noyem, 24/07/14).*

While land in itself was abundant and may not necessarily be a factor in conflict, it was the land deemed to contain gold deposits that had been the source of contention. In particular, indigenous youth had initiated disputes because, as they saw it, migrants had been granted rights to their lands while no attempts had been made to protect them, and because they believed that their demands had been ignored.

As well as the encroachment and destruction of lands and farm products, migrant miners had been accused of bypassing community leadership, refusing to give the community its share of the load, arrogating to themselves autonomy over sites, and showing contempt for the dictates of the communities. Interviews and discussions indicated that disagreements and misunderstandings could be over anything, but a disagreement between a migrant and an indigene could easily degenerate into conflict. During the fieldwork, there were several accounts of migrant-host conflict and I surmised that while indigenes were quick to blame migrants for any trouble, migrants felt that they were unduly scapegoated. In an FGD with indigenes, migrants were characterised as the cause of hostilities. Lack of respect for authority, bad manners, uncleanliness and open disregard for the norms and customs of the community were among the issues that angered indigenes and led to conflict. The migrants, on the other hand, indicated that conflicts would continue as long as indigenes persisted in the hostile takeover of the best 'phase' and pits and continued using the now too-common narrative of "the land belongs to us":

> *At the sites, indigenes have often made reference to the fact that the land belongs to them, and have forced their way into the pit and evicted migrants. Some migrants have, however, resisted because they believe that the land belongs to the government" (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (44), Pankese near Akoase, 19/09/14).*

Conflicts between migrant miners and the host, especially indigenous miners, began almost at the onset of galamsey in the district. In Noyem, indigenes were angered by the unlimited access given to the migrants, and migrants, strengthened by close-knit gangs and large numbers, boasted that they recognised no authority and would stand up to anyone who confronted them. After persistent unheeded appeals to the chief and the elders, the indigenous youth organised themselves to attack the migrants. Eventually, the security agencies settled the conflict. However, this was only the beginning, and was one of the many conflicts that would occur between migrants and indigenes. Paradoxically, because the traditional leaders and some of the youth were more eager to benefit from gold mining

than to fight, they allowed the migrants continued access to the sites, and though conflicts continued, they were rarely destructive. Most of the indigenous youth gained experience by working with the migrants. However, as they gained more experience they realised that not only were the label of migrants as users of drugs, hooligans and perpetrators of social vices true, they were also cheats. This increased the hostility between the two groups, and matters came to a climax when migrants' lodgings were demolished in Noyem, and when indigenes in Nyafoman demanded unrestricted access to the pits and sole control over other ancillary services.

Both migrant and host continually rallied, showing massive solidarity against attacks from the opposing group. In a recent conflict in Nyafoman between a migrant from the north and a member of the committee, the migrant was wounded with a cutlass after attempting to hide part of his load. This infuriated some of his kinsmen, who ganged up and thrashed the alleged perpetrator. A full-scale conflict broke out when youth in the community heard about the attack. *"The clash lasted a week, but eventually it was resolved by the chief and elders"* said Fuseni, a migrant miner from the North. Another trigger of conflict was between the committee[66] and migrants due to the arbitrary manner in which the committee apportioned loads for themselves. In an FGD with migrants, they intimated that the committee allocated to themselves more than the agreed share of the load, telling the migrants to willingly leave the site and the community if they felt slighted. While most yielded, a few challenged the decisions and amidst raised voices and increased tension, the atmosphere on site became hostile. Over time, though, conflicts between the two groups abated, partly due to the setting up of the committees and partly for fear that such uncontrolled violence might eventually lead to the government putting a stop to galamsey mining in the district.

The above depiction of the manner in which conflicts took place was consistent with the Conflict Curve (see Chapter 3) found in studies by Lung (1996), Medler et al. (2008) and the USAID (2012). In the initial stages, conflict was subtle or concealed, then it escalated over time; this was when, according to Medler et al., the actors involved could harness group solidarity and gather material resources to engage in hostilities against the opposition. Lung introduced a factor not mentioned by Medler et al.: a peak period in the level of conflict, after which the degree of intensity gradually diminishes. This was known as the period of de-escalation, where either the actors did not have the resources to continue, or group solidarity had faded. It could also be a time when groups were no longer interested in waging war, and when treaties were enacted for conflict prevention, moderation and peace. The mining communities in the Birim North District typically welcomed the migrants despite opposition from a section of the population. It was not uncommon to find the emergence of hostilities against migrants; however, conflicts were understated as indigenes used that period to learn the skills of galamsey gold mining from migrants. Over time, conflicts escalated due to intense

[66] Almost all members of the committee are indigenes.

competition as indigenes, now experienced, felt that as "sons and daughters of the soil" they should gain more benefits than those not from the community. After persistent conflicts, raised tensions and the resultant invasion by the security task force, attempts were made to bring peace to the area through the setting up of the mining committees.

While the conflict curve depicted a de-escalation in the latter stages, and observations during the fieldwork revealed that conflicts between migrants and the host had abated appreciably, there was a noticeable subtle tension brewing, especially in Noyem. In a community durbar ostensibly organised to address the deplorable conditions and 'strange happenings'[67] in the community, migrants were targeted for building mud-and-thatch accommodation, polluting and desecrating the river, engaging in detestable acts like weed smoking and contravening the customs and practices of the community. John, a migrant from Akwatia, envisaged that the current harmony seemed to be waning. During an FGD with migrants, he said:

> *Lately there has been a dampened mood and appreciable rise in tension in the community because we are not extracting as much gold as before, and as such any misdemeanour is seen to have been caused by migrants. Migrants are seen as users of drugs, untidy, perpetrators of social vices, disrespectful of authority and customs, and builders of mud-and-thatch houses, as if members of the community were saints and there were no mud houses in their part of the community (Excerpt from FGD with migrants, Noyem, 12/08/14).*

Though evidence showed that conflicts between migrant and host had decreased significantly over the years, some of the miners feared the imminent danger of its escalating. While conflicts had abated, this had been achieved through the endeavours and cooperation of the various stakeholders within the ASM industry. The following chapter explores attempts to de-escalate conflict and to guarantee the peaceful coexistence of migrants and indigenes.

[67] There was an outbreak of a strange disease and the deaths of two prominent people and a female migrant, which are thought to have been caused by the wrath of the river goddess.

Chapter Seven
Fostering Cooperation and Peace between ASM and the Community

An Akan symbol of "the TEETH and TONGUE", a symbol of interdependence, friendship, and cooperation[68]

7.0 Introduction

While group distinctions and conflicts are ever-present and inherent in human societies, so has been the quest for resolution, peace and harmony. Describing this as a "two-sided coin of human cooperation and conflicts", Hamburg (1998: 3) provided vivid examples of society's attempts at reconciliation and reconstruction after conflict, whether latent and emergent or violent. Just as the triggers of conflicts were varied, so are the approaches to resolving them.[69] Each clash is unique, and as Zartman (2000) said, the only commonality in conflict, even in Africa, was 'location on the same continent', so that any search for a concrete approach to resolution should focus to a large extent on "central incompatibilities" (see Wallensteen, 2012). In recent times, western approaches to conflict resolution, often described as adversarial and accusatory (Brock-Utne, 2001), have given way to home-grown measures considered to be reconciliatory, cooperative and consensus-building. As such, any attempt at resolving conflicts should be appropriately contextualised.

While it is not uncommon to find experts and third party agents facilitating resolutions, the literature on conflict resolution posits that the main actors are better placed for success (Lewis, 1996). These individuals and groups are aware of the leading issues and understand each other's needs; are conversant with the socio-cultural context; and are in the best position to develop solutions that are agreeable to all parties involved. Nevertheless, consideration of each party's opinion and interest is at best academic, since in practice, diversity of position and intention preclude mutually agreed outcomes. This is especially true when one or more of the parties uses their elevated position in terms of authority, prestige and influence to impose their views on the other parties.

The above provides a contextual background to the third empirical chapter, which investigates the fifth research question. It focuses on responses, structures and mechanisms for managing and

[68] The symbol depicts that though the tongue and teeth may clash, i.e. become embroiled in conflict, they have to find peace and work together. This can be stretched to argue that invariably the host and migrants have to find peace after conflict since they play interdependent roles.

[69] For example, resolving an organisational conflict may involve a very different approach than when individuals and groups, including family and friends, are involved.

resolving conflicts, especially among migrant artisanal miners and host communities, including miners and non-miners. This chapter is divided into four sections. The first analyses artisanal migrant miners' responses to conflicts in the course of their stay in the Birim North District, emphasising their modes of adaptability or counteraction to confrontation in an environment that is more or less hostile to them. The second section focuses on managing peace. It takes a critical look at the structured mechanisms for handling and resolving conflicts, with particular emphasis on the role of the main actors, the methods adopted and the successes. The next section analyses the role of state and non-state actors and enquires whether young people have been the specific target of intervention. The final section focuses principally on the perceptions of youth miners on the lessons learned and how they believe differences can be properly managed.

7.1 Adaptations and Counteractions

It was observed that most of the artisanal migrant miners chose either to adapt or to counteract in response to conflict.[70] On one hand, they frequently resigned themselves to intermittent aggression from the host and undertook a series of actions to decrease potential harm. For instance, considering their position as 'strangers', when confronted in the pits by the host, most either moved to the next unoccupied pit or waited for a 'new period of exploitation' (see Gratz, 2002: 7). Salifu, a migrant from Sandema in the Northern Region, described the obvious futility of opposing hostility from the host rather than to acquiesce, given that they had customary rights to the land:

> *There are times that they* (host miners) *have stopped us from working. We just move out of the pits and wait for them to finish, or look for other free pits. These have been very difficult times such that we have virtually gone to the buyers for chop money because we have not been able to mine for a couple of days (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (8), Noyem, 25/07/14).*

Here migrants acknowledged and acceded to the legitimacy of the host and avoided altercations, perhaps presuming that they stood to lose more in the event of any conflict. By allowing host miners access, the migrants not only averted a potential conflict, but also safeguarded their stay in the communities. Moreover, in a bid to protect their economic interests, the migrant miners had forged partnerships with members of the host communities. Although *ceteris paribus* migrant gangs preferred to work closely with their long-standing experienced members, they included some members of the host community as part of their gang to deflect any potential attacks and to earn the trust of the host and safeguard their earnings. Another way in which they adapted was to choose to work for the host, who often became their sponsor. Because these sponsors were often influential people or opinion leaders with considerable authority in the community, indigenous youth were disinclined to attack, giving the migrants unhindered access and free rein to undertake their activities. However, it is worth mentioning that migrants opting to work for indigenes were in the minority.

[70] While adaptations involve adjustments to limit possible harm (Bronkhorst, 2014), counteractions, either consciously or unconsciously, are an individual's or group's attempt to "react in oppositional ways" (Forgas et al., 2011).

Similarly, migrants had justified their continued stay and right of exploitation[71] by performing various tasks in the communities. While communal work was compulsory and absenteeism usually carried a fine, it was not uncommon to find migrants willing to perform menial tasks for the host, especially for opinion leaders and elders. This often beneficial relationship between youth (not only migrants) and adults was "stipulated in culture and preserved by norms, folklore and even taboos" (Muia et al., 2013: 1). For instance, during an interview with Agya Kojo, the Chief of Noyem's linguist and head of the community's committee, held on his farm, migrant women were observed carrying logs for him. He claimed the labour was undertaken at no cost to him, but of the women's own free will**.** Essentially, such an undertaking was a tactic by which migrants expected a just recompense when the need arose. Migrants also contributed financially towards community development projects. They also contributed their share when community members were surcharged for the cost of a development project, or when an undertaking demanded contributions from the entire community. A case in point was that when the Noyem community had to pacify the river goddess Aprokuma, migrants were not exempted from contributing towards the cost. Similarly, migrants occasionally donated cash and/or paid in kind for ceremonies such as funerals. While these measures had not been carried out deliberately, they had been used by migrants to justify their presence and their exploitation of gold, and they had invariably reduced any form of alienation and ensured adequate protection from harm.

However, rather than adapting, a significant proportion of migrants chose to counteract any opposition from the youth of the community.[72] Their attempts had often resulted in increased hostilities or expulsion from the community, as was seen in the previous chapter. Cognisant of strength in numbers, the migrants had joined one of the several migrant gangs in the firm belief that numbers offered protection and the ability to stand up to any aggression from indigenous youth. A respondent intimated that:

> *We ignore them most of the time, especially if there are more of them. However, on more than one occasion we have stood our ground and this has led to arguments and serious fights. No one can intimidate us here. We are all one people (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (3), Noyem, 22/07/14).*

Asked whether migrant galamsey miners engaged in concerted counteraction against indigenous youth, the head of the Noyem mining committee stated that:

> *Indigenes were at times of the view that the land belonged to them and that they could exercise their right over the land and the migrants. This also infuriated the migrants and led to clashes between the two. So, to quell such disturbances and conflict, indigenes*

[71] The term 'right of exploitation' refers to the right to undertake gold mining in a particular jurisdiction (see Gratz, 2002: 3)

[72] It may perhaps be foolhardy, but when one group perceives the other as aggressive it has adopted confrontation to show its strength in a hope that it would discourage the aggressors of future hostilities. While it is a strategy that might be fruitful, forcing the parties to a resolution, it could result in entrenchment, if the aggressors are not intimidated.

> *also found to have flouted the rules of the site were not spared (Personal communication, Head of Noyem mining committee, 22/09/14).*

While this approach was the lesser favoured option among migrant miners, they asserted that they had to resort to it in the face of persistent attacks from indigenes. For added protection, some of the migrants stated that they preferred to be associated with gangs who were assertive and intimidating due to the perceived advantages associated with membership of such gangs (see the relationship among miners in Chapter Five).[73]

Aggression was mostly perpetuated by indigenes, but on occasion migrants had initiated attacks on indigenes and other migrant gangs. In these cases, indigenes had called on the chiefs and elders[74] to deal with the migrants. However, when community leaders had failed to act, and not to be outdone in their own community, young people had organised a counterattack on migrants. Kojo claimed that though they usually stood their ground, some migrant gangs noted for their aggressive behaviour intimidated everyone:

> *... for instance, there was a gang headed by Mutalla, who instilled so much fear in everyone that they had their way most of the time. Thankfully, they have left this place (Interview, Host galamsey operator (8), Noyem, 24/07/14).*

While both approaches had the potential to limit conflicts, they had not been enough to eradicate them. For instance, the fear of persistent reprisals or expulsion had greatly limited, but not entirely eliminated, conflicts, and this had led to the adoption of several approaches to resolve the situation. The next section explores the role played by mediators in the attempt to find resolutions to these pervasive conflicts.

7.2 Managing and Promoting Peace

Because galamsey was illegal, people were wary of seeking redress from security agencies or the courts and opted for traditional processes which, established in the norms and customs of the communities, aimed "to restore a balance, to settle and eliminate disputes" (Choudree, 1999: 11). Significantly, not only were these processes less formal, but they felt less intimidating since they took place within a familiar environment. As a rule, parties looking to resolve conflict avoided resorting to the police as much as possible, and most conflict was resolved by the committee in conjunction with the various gang leaders and ghetto owners. The chief was seldom called on to mediate, and it was even rarer for the police to be involved other than in cases of grievous bodily harm. Indeed, while the miners would generally not seek outside assistance, the committee had often been obliged to report very serious offences involving life-threatening injuries to police officers. However, conflict resolution was commensurate with the level of risk or intensity, so that arguments and verbal

[73] Adida (2008) agrees that migrants assimilate with out-groups because aside from opening up new economic prospects, it guaranteed their greater safety.
[74] Elders are older or senior individuals who have considerable power or influence in the community.

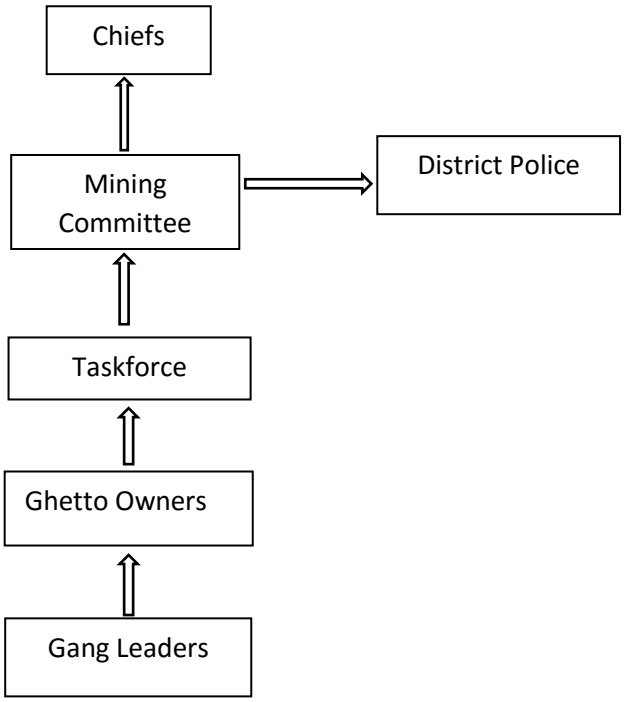
disagreements were handled by gang leaders, while the most intense disputes were referred to the members of the committee (see Table 7.1 below)

Table 7.1: Major forms of conflict and mediators in the Birim North District

Nature of Dispute	**Actors or Mediators**
Disputes among gang members over the share of the proceeds/money	Gang leaders, Older Experienced Miners
Arguments, verbal disagreements, quarrels between gangs (in and outside the pits)	Gang leaders, Ghetto Owners, Committee
Disputes over stolen load and theft of tools, etc.	Committee, Ghetto Owners
Perimeter/Boundary Conflicts	Committee, Gang Leaders, Ghetto Owners
Disputes over exploitation period (time spent in the pits)	Ghetto Owners
Conflicts regarding the share of load between gangs and the ghetto owners	Committee
Conflicts regarding the share of load between gangs and committee	Various (no specific entity was identified). However, on sites which have management committees, they mediate in such disputes
Disputes over encroachment (farms and other private lands)	Chief and Community Elders
Theft of private property (in the community)	Chief, District Police
Disagreements over accountability of community accruals from galamsey, mainly youth actions and aggressions	Chief, Community Elders
Conflicts (various) that lead to grievous bodily harm	Committee, Chief, District Police

Source: Compiled from responses from respondents.

Fig 7.1: Visual Hierarchical Representation of Conflict Mediators



Source: Compiled from responses from respondents.

Fig 7.1 is a visual representation of the channels involved in resolving disputes. Since most conflicts took place in the presence of gang leaders, they were the first in line to intervene, especially when the disputes occurred in the pits out of sight of the committee and ghetto owners. The ghetto owners, stationed at the entrance to the pits, were next in line. Though, as owners of the pits, they wielded power that could not be ignored, neither they nor the gang leaders often succeeded, because they were considered partial, and often took sides to protect their interest.

Members of the task force were seen as the foot soldiers of the committee, principally carrying out their bidding. Typically, they received the community's share of the load and attended to any other matter prescribed by the committee, and because they often interacted with the miners, they occasionally intervened in conflicts. The next in line was the committee (whose role is discussed below), and if they were unsuccessful, they sought the counsel of the chiefs and elders. In the case of serious injury, the district police became involved. However, as stated earlier, such cases were rare.

7.2.1 The Role of the Committee in Conflict Resolution

As stated earlier, steering committees were formed, among other measures, to resolve conflict. They were intended to combine the knowledge acquired by miners from outside the District, the district assembly unit committees and the small-scale mining committees established under Section 92 of the

Minerals and Mining Act, 2006 (Act 703).[75] The committees were established through the collaborative efforts of communities that had discovered gold, specifically to ensure the smooth running of galamsey and to protect law, order and peace on each of the mining sites. Their chief responsibilities were to intervene to resolve conflicts, and to enforce rules and regulations to prevent them from escalating and spilling over into the community. In a group discussion with members of the Noyem mining committee, they said that despite the fact that the deeds and behaviour of the migrants revealed their troublesome and malicious nature:

> *Because we needed them, we resorted to forming a unit committee, based on the concept of the district assembly's unit committees, to regulate the activities of galamsey, control the behaviour of the migrants, resolve conflicts and take a share of the proceeds for the development of the community" (FGD, Unit committee members, Noyem, 25/07/14)*.

The community leaders acknowledged that conflicts were virtually unavoidable, especially in the face of competition between host and migrant youth, and with some of the host community believing that migrants were parasitizing their resources. Thus, the initial mandate of the committee was to keep conflicts at the sites from extending into the community. However, they soon realised that this was impossible and decided to set up a committee in the community as well.

> *Those at the sites dealt with the issues there, including maintaining security and collection of the share of community in loads or 'gent', while the committee in the community dealt with matters that arose here. The chief was responsible for overseeing the committee. To quell conflict, we decided to fine the opposing parties fifty cedis each and the miscreant or anyone found to have been the instigator will forfeit the amount" (FGD, Unit committee members, Noyem, 25/07/14).*

From observations made during the course of the study, it was apparent that despite all the actors being aware of the illegality of their activities and hence the inherent lack of legitimacy of the committees, the latter were still considered as the law and accorded due recognition and respect by the miners. This was because they derived their authority from the chiefs, and also because most of them were elders, with influence and respect in the communities.

While the migrant miners acknowledged that they were in full agreement on the establishment of the committee, and that it was partly their idea, they were disappointed that they had no say in the selection of the members, and they expressed regret that this should have been carried out through collaboration rather than being imposed by the chiefs and elders. However, the head of the management committee in Nyafoman stated that during the formation of the committee, a meeting was called to solicit names of prospective members, and that those successful at the end of the vetting process were constituted into various committees and task forces.

[75] Who actually came up with the idea of the committee is disputed. Most of the migrant respondents claim that it was their idea; it was an institution that pertained in areas where they had previously stayed. Members of the communities hold that they copied the model of decentralisation, which had unit committees in the grassroots.

Additionally, though all the stakeholders agreed to the usefulness of the committee, its activities and measures had raised objections. Despite a general acknowledgement of its success, a section of the mining populace believed that its achievements were at best average. Employing measures ranging from dialogue and reconciliatory deliberations through to fines, closure of pits and sites and outright banishment from sites and from the community, the committee had significantly reduced the rampant and violent conflicts. Observing the miners at work and how they carried themselves in the community, there was no hint of fear or anxiety amongst them, except when they were approached by a stranger. They were amiable with each other and there was no antagonism. The highest level of aggression noticed among the miners was verbal, with the casting of insinuations, aspersions and insults occasionally degenerating into fisticuffs.

The respondents attributed the calm and sociable atmosphere to the presence of the committee, noting that without them, fights would be frequent and very violent and that invariably, this would be an ungovernable and treacherous place to work. For instance, if a territory dispute flared up into arguments and heated exchanges, a member of the committee's task force was sent into the pits to properly demarcate the boundaries for each gang. However, if it led to serious fights and injuries, the pit was temporarily closed and the matter was resolved amicably before they were allowed back to work. The culprit(s) was either fined or his load seized. If the conflict was very violent with multiple injuries, the committee resorted to the police, or expelled the offender from the site. This was confirmed by the head of the management committee in Nyafoman, who explained that before the establishment of the committees, conflict was endemic and very destructive; this was not surprising to anyone familiar with galamsey activities. However, presently the committee was the mandated authority to sort out any problem, including conflicts. He further stated that:

> *If the case is not very serious, the committees are obligated to resolve it. They usually use dialogue and reasoning to settle differences among the conflicting parties. If they are unable to resolve it, it is referred to the management committee. The management committee meets the parties in the community. If an agreement cannot be reached, the police are called in to deal with the matter. However, in most cases, it is resolved at the site. The rather difficult ones that come to us are also resolved because the parties are very apprehensive of the police (Personal communication, Mining committee chairman, Nyafoman, 13/08/14).*

The respondents who disagreed (though they believed that to a certain degree the committee had been effective in reducing conflict, both on site and in the communities) asserted that galamsey in itself was illegal, and as such any association or group formed out of it was also illegal, therefore the committee could not claim to be the law. Secondly, they posited that the committees were more interested in taking their share of the load than in the welfare of the workers. They said that in most cases, committee members were quick to impose fines just to line their pockets, since they did not have to account for this money. Lastly, they claimed that they submitted to the dictates of the committee

because the latter incessantly threatened to seize their loads or expel them from the sites, and for fear of reprisal attacks from the community. *Abakari* from the North claimed:

> *The committee has not succeeded totally in eliminating conflict because there are still cases of aggression, especially towards migrants on site. Furthermore, the heavy-handedness of the committee leaves much to be desired. The amount of load they confiscate in itself leads to conflict (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (13), Akoase, 01/08/14).*

This was corroborated by an indigenous miner who stated that:

> *In a way, the measures of the committee have been partially successful because they seem more interested in the load that they will get. It is a money-making committee. For instance, there was a night that the pit collapsed on someone, they did not answer to our persistent calls, and it was someone else who assisted us in taking the injured person to Nkawkaw (Interview, Host galamsey operator (2), Noyem, 22/07/14).*

To a large extent, there was validity in the migrant miners' assertion, particularly as observations revealed that the committee was more interested in the amount of load they could accumulate than in resolving the frequent bickering among the miners. In one instance during the fieldwork, it was a ghetto owner who played the dominant role while the member of the committee on the site looked on unconcerned. However, the head of the management committee in Nyafoman countered these assertions, saying that the measures they had taken had been very successful, reducing conflict considerably. He said that this was not because the miners were too intimidated to acquiesce, but because their opinions were sought before any measures were implemented and the conclusions became law at the site. He reiterated that:

> *The method of sharing was discussed and everyone's input was taken on board, especially those who have been to places where the community takes its share. After consultation, it was agreed that the load should be divided into three equal parts. The committee took one, and the workers two. The workers' share covered their labour and expenses and the ghetto owners' share (Personal Communication, Mining committee chairman, Nyafoman, 13/08/14).*

Kobina from Cape Coast in the Central Region believed that though the committee had made significant inroads in reducing conflict, they needed to do more to assist the miners and also to dispel the belief that they were more interested in protecting indigenes. He stated that in most instances, when a fight erupted between an indigene and a migrant and the former was at fault, he was only cautioned. However, if it was the fault of the migrant, he was either fined or, in extreme cases, ousted from the site. This view was often expressed by migrant respondents, who felt that the committees were lenient towards indigenes and towards their favourites, while migrants were unduly sanctioned when an expression of regret would do. The element of partiality had led to an upsurge of indiscipline among the indigenes, who felt beyond reproach, and created dissent among migrants. Furthermore, migrants had been excluded from membership of the committees, a situation that had greatly displeased them. The migrants shared the view that their inclusion on the committees would be a step

in the right direction, since elected migrant leaders would liaise on behalf of migrants as well as relaying their concerns to the committees and community leaders. Essentially, respondents believed that the inclusion of migrants on the committees would promote inclusiveness, allow their voices to be heard and include them in decision-making. Any such decisions would be deemed as fair and just, since migrants on the committees would not allow any prejudice against their colleagues.

7.2.2 The Role of Traditional Leaders in Conflict Resolution

The dominance of the institution of chieftaincy has declined in recent years, particularly as Ghana adopted the colonial western style of governance after independence (see Aryee, 2007). However, it remained relevant and was considered to play an indispensable role in the life and development of the people and communities. Lately, the chiefs had reinvented themselves, departing from their traditional roles, pushing agendas and promoting community development. Their legitimacy, largely rooted and circumscribed in the customs and traditions of the people, was often seen as a complement to the state's authority. In localities under their jurisdiction, the authority of the chiefs was unrivalled. Considered to be the leaders and spiritual heads of their people, the traditional leaders commanded great respect from their subjects. Traditionally, the chiefs were acknowledged as the custodians of natural resources, especially the land under their jurisdiction, holding it in trust for their people. Indeed, the authority of the traditional leaders was particularly felt in areas that were remote or alienated from the influence of the state. Realistically, one could not gain entrance into a community without paying a courtesy call on the chief. For instance, newly posted civil and public servants, strangers and migrants would have to seek the permission of the chief before they could gain access to the community.

Among the chiefs' many roles were the "arbitration and representational roles and the potential to facilitate accountability to the people" (Aryee, 2007: 2). Indeed, before the advent of the formal court system, the chiefs traditionally mediated in conflicts and currently were often sought to intervene in disputes, because they were noted to bring the conflicting parties together, preferring a reconciliatory approach to the adversarial mode of the modern courts. The chiefs in the mining communities in the Birim North District had been instrumental in the process of conflict resolution. With the increasing intensification of conflicts within their communities due to the influx of migrants, and with the parties unwilling to seek redress from the police and courts, they were often called upon to settle disputes (see Nugent, 2012: 131). Resolutions may be undertaken directly by the chief or by any of his mandated appointees. Comparing the role of the chiefs in conflict mediation to that of the committee, respondents attested that they had more trust in the chiefs. For instance, they had promptly reconciled disputes between host and migrant over encroachment. As custodians of the land and the natural resources under their jurisdiction, the chiefs often adopted a reconciliatory approach in which both parties agreed to share the proceeds. This type of ruling had greatly reduced encroachment conflicts because both parties saw it as a win-win outcome. However, not everyone was enthused by the chiefs'

ability to settle encroachment disputes. A respondent (nicknamed Teacher) was very critical of the chief of Noyem's approach, claiming that despite the chief's and leaders' responsibility to act to stop the persistent encroachment of his family lands:

> *…they (the chief and leaders) connived and allowed the migrants back because of their selfish need. Furthermore, the chief and leaders of the town have also been made rich through it, as most of them have invested in the machines that the miners use (Adult Interviewee (17), Retired Teacher from Noyem, 19/09/14).*

Furthermore, the chief's role was not restricted to conflict resolution, but he was also expected to anticipate conflicts and find innovative approaches to stop them through a series of initiatives and strategies (Choudree, 1999). A significant measure chiefs in these mining communities adopted was the establishment of the mining committees; these had been fundamental in reducing escalation, and especially in preventing conflicts from spilling over into the communities (see the role of the committees in 7.2.1). However, despite the institution of the committees, the chiefs were still regarded as the final arbiters in conflict resolution. On a few occasions, the committees had been unable to resolve disputes amicably and had sought the counsel of the chiefs. But though the migrant youth miners expected that the chiefs would remain neutral in mediating in conflicts, they had often found them more sensitive to the views of their own people, giving judgement in their favour.[76] However, no matter how aggrieved one might be by the ruling of the chiefs, hardly anyone had openly challenged it, especially migrants. This was because they were aware of the chiefs' power, including the authority to banish offender(s) who defied their ruling. To a great extent, this was also because traditionally, the chiefs were beyond public reproach. A case in point was a female migrant who persistently flouted the directive of the chief of Noyem that no one was to use the rivers in the community to curse people who had offended them. The family reluctantly accepted the chief's ruling when she was heavily fined, and she was spared from expulsion because her husband had constructed his house in the community.

In addition, the chiefs had been known to intercede on behalf of the artisanal miners by posting bonds for them when they had been arrested by the police for various offences. According to the chief's linguist in Noyem, due to his extensive power and influence as the overlord of his community, the chief could persuade the police to release suspects involved in lesser offences and for matters to be settled outside the courts.[77] Two reasons could be deduced for chiefs seeking to withdraw cases from the police. The first was the critical role of peace-building in the community's development process, to which a vibrant chief considered conflict resolution and mediation as integral (Rukuni et al., 2015). The second was to limit further investigations which might reveal the extent of the community's, and the leadership's, involvement in galamsey. These mining communities were small, and as such most

[76] This concurs with a study by Jonsson (2007) where she reveals that chiefs are not just authority structures, but are actors with interest and often swayed by the opinions of their subjects.

[77] Within their jurisdictions, chiefs are "local-level lawmakers, tax collectors, police commissioners and judges", such that they frequently use their coercive power to intervene on behalf of their subjects (Keulder, 2005: 50).

people were known by the chief or his elders. Even in situations where leaders were not acquainted with the offenders, which were very common due to the large number of migrants, once they could be vouched for as residents in the community, they would stand surety for them. Accomplishing this on behalf of the people, the chiefs were considered as more powerful than the state, which was alienated from them. Therefore, the chief's voice was the law, and parties engaged in conflicts consented to his rulings. For instance, with a police post on his land, the chief of Akoase was reported to have obstructed the police by intermittently requesting that they brought cases of his subjects to him, to be handled in a 'family way'.

7.2.3 The Role of Third Party Agents

7.2.3.1 The Role of the State

The government, in this instance the District Assembly, had a unique, multifaceted role as both a player and regulator within the mining sector, and it is expected not to be indifferent when conflicts related to mining emerged in any part of the country. The Assembly has a moral obligation to the citizenry to ensure that the necessary steps are taken to resolve, if not to totally curtail, these mining-related conflicts. Indeed, several authors including Banchirigah (2006), Maconachie and Hilson (2011), and Hilson and Potter (2005) acknowledged that since 1989 the central government stance on informal artisanal mining had changed. This comes after persistent government raids on illegal mining operations in the early 1980s, especially in Wassa in the Western Region, leading to the arrest and prosecution of most of the operators (Aubynn, 2009). The government took a fundamental decision to legislate for small-scale mining, and this culminated in the establishment of "a legal framework within which small-scale miners register and operate" (Aryee et al., 2003: 2). As well as providing opportunities for the poor, Hilson and Potter (2005: 106) noted that it gave them "a legitimate 'voice' in key decision-making processes". The Precious Minerals Marketing Corporation (PMMC) was thus set up to give small-scale miners a ready market as well as establish training and educational centres[78] in the Districts, in the hope of changing the "pre-regularisation attitudes" of the miners (Aryee, 2003).

According to the respondents, this was the most positive step undertaken by the government, first in recognising them (i.e. only if they obtained a license), and secondly in providing an avenue for sustenance. However, that was the farthest the government had gone in playing any major positive role in the informal mining sector. The indication from the respondents, confirmed by key stakeholders and scholars (Andrew, 2003; Hilson and Porter, 2005) was that the cumbersome processes involved had made it nearly impossible for them to legalise their operations; this was largely attributed to the fact that the government prioritised large-scale mining companies over them. As Akabzaa (2001) noted, this drive was essentially to promote foreign investment and boost export revenues. Indeed, despite the partial recognition of galamsey operators by the government, their

[78] These education and training centres were never established. They were more theoretical than practical and moreover, the artisanal miners were not aware of their existence.

relationship had been at best frosty. Responses that resonated during the interviews revealed that miners believed that the government was unable to perform any mediation role since it did not recognise them in any true sense as galamsey operators. There were several examples of government using security agencies to expel them, using brute force, from lands that had been mined by their forebears.

In relation to conflicts within galamsey, and most especially host-migrant conflict, the respondents stated that rather than the government providing mechanisms to resolve the teething conflicts that hampered their operations, it used the security forces to brutalise them and close the sites (see Hilson, 2010). Yaw Manu, commenting on this, stated that:

> *The only role that the government has played in galamsey is directing the security agencies to attack us (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (43), Nyafoman, 19/09/14).*

Observations at some of the mining sites showed the destruction committed by the security forces, including burnt air compressors and excavators. However, it is worth noting that while state officials in the District were aware of the existence and the location of galamsey operations, they only intervened when conflicts escalated or when the media reported on atrocities committed by galamsey operators in the area. However, Aubynn (2009) cited the lack of political will as the main reason why the state and its officials had been disinclined to stop galamsey. There would be detrimental political consequences for the government in power. But the District Police Commander noted that having the miners at the sites kept them from crime and kept the communities beyond the mining areas safe, especially when no alternative jobs had been provided for them.

Though wary of any unknown faces, lest they were officials of the government, the miners recounted that on a couple of occasions they had received help from government institutions. On one occasion, officials from the Ministry of Health distributed leaflets on how to use and protect themselves from mercury and its inherent danger, and during an outbreak of cholera, health officers dispensed drugs and showed how to maintain proper hygiene. On another occasion, when one of the pits in Nyafoman collapsed, the District Assembly hired an excavator to help retrieve the remains of the dead miners. After this, an interview was set up with the District Coordinating Director to find out why the government was not providing much help to galamsey miners. The Director explained that they could not act in any way to help the galamsey miners because as illegal miners, they were not recognised by the state. However, neither could they forcibly close the sites because of the extent of the involvement of the traditional authorities and the community at large.

Lastly, as noted earlier, the miners rarely appealed to state institutions to mediate in conflicts, but rather preferred deliberations conducted by local level communal representatives such as the committees and traditional authorities. The respondents reiterated that to seek deliberations from formal institutions like the police and courts was expensive, protracted and bureaucratic, and subject

to the payment of bribes whether one was the complainant or the defendant. Situations resulting in grievous bodily harm, or where the intensity of conflict outweighed the committee's capacity to arbitrate, were reported to the police, but most conflicts were settled at home. Also, some cases being handled by the police had been settled at home at the request of the chief or the parties involved. Artisanal miners avoided state institutions because, firstly, they feared that they may implicate themselves as being involved in an illegal activity, which could land them in further trouble, and secondly, because they were alienated from the state and could not rely on them to come to their aid. Indeed, the only time the state's presence was felt was when the security forces descended on the miners.

The respondents were emphatic that the present state of galamsey could not offer any meaningful development to the district, or indeed to the country. They held that fear, tension and hostility surrounding galamsey would be a thing of the past if the government took a second and critical look, and that as well as proper legislation, the activity needed support and investment. Aside from proposing that the government should legalise galamsey, which they knew was implausible, the respondents suggested that the communities should seek a legal title to their lands for gold mining. They were emphatic that despite the government soliciting their votes and engaging their services when it suits, especially during election periods, and despite their significant contribution to the total volume of gold production in the country, the government's attitude to them had not altered over the years. They contended that the government's efforts to eradicate galamsey in favour of large-scale mining had increased insecurity and led to an exacerbation of conflict. They believed that there could be a significant reduction in conflict between migrants and host if the communities sought to have the land's licensed, since firstly, it would give them sole autonomy over the land and anyone working on it, and secondly, they could exact the appropriate punishment against operators who broke the rules and regulations.

7.2.3.2 The Role of NGOs

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs), recognised as important actors, have in recent years assumed a critical role in the global political, socioeconomic and environmental spheres.[79] As a huge community, ranging from international organisations to local grassroots groups, NGOs have provided an array of services including advocacy; combating hunger, strife and poverty; stemming the tide of environmental degradation providing healthcare; and most especially, delivering projects and programmes to locations that governments have been unable to access. Today, most NGOs have transcended their traditional functions and play an increasing "role in the process of agenda-setting and policy development" (Goel, 2004: 134). In 1997, Lloyd Axworthy, the former Canadian Foreign

[79] In the past three decades as their numbers have increased exponentially (Coumans, 2011), so have their influence and leverage, with authors like Fitzduff and Church (2004) attributing their heightened authority to the "fifth estate" in the global scene.

Minister, envisaged that NGOs' role would be extended and they would become key actors in the formulation of decisions (Simmons, 1988). NGOs' role in conflict mitigation began more than a century ago, and they were especially active during the world wars; however, they have progressively focused on other causes and their role in conflict prevention had diminished. But Fitzduff and Church (2004) suggest that in the past couple of decades, they have evolved and increased their capacity to deal with conflict situations. Over time, NGOs have become more important as they have taken over some of the role of the state, and most particularly, have met the felt needs of their target communities.

In Ghana, there was a proliferation of NGOs, both local and international, offering a range of services including, but not limited to, poverty reduction, health services and education and training to the citizenry. Indeed, the relationship between NGOs and the people was far from antagonistic as both parties realised the benefits of such harmonious relationships. However, according to the respondents, though they were aware of some of the activities of NGOs in the country, sadly they were absent in the area of study. While they recognised that they needed the services the NGOs provided, and believed that the latter had the capacity to lessen their workload and help them make galamsey more environmentally friendly, they had not seen them operating in the communities. While almost all the respondents said that NGOs had not played any significant role in galamsey in the Birim North District, a couple of them had on more than one occasion witnessed groups visiting the sites, though nothing substantial had emerged from those visits.

> *Some people came here about five years ago to count us, ostensibly to help government know our numbers and what facilities and help the government may bring to us. But we haven't seen or heard from them since (Interview, Host galamsey operator (10), Nyafoman, 25/07/14).*

> *In the past, I remember that a couple of groups came onto the site, but because of the raid by police and military no one was prepared to listen to them (Interview, Host galamsey operator (25), Akoase, 19/09/14).*

These were the views of respondents who had been on the site for more than five years, and while this might suggest that NGOs had tried to assist miners in the past, these stories had not been corroborated by other stakeholders such as members of the committee. Because of their elevated position in the communities, they would have been aware if an NGO had visited the site.

Their absence was surprising considering that NGOs were "a basic form of popular representation" in most of these rural communities (see Fitzduff and Church, 2004), and were often known to be among the first to get to the scene of conflict, to predict conditions for conflict escalation and to stay longer than any other party (Aggestam, 2003). However, they had no presence in mining communities in the Birim North District. This may be because galamsey was still considered illegal, so NGOs might not want to be seen to perpetrate this, or, as Hayes and Perks (2012: 540) found, "artisanal mining is often beyond their vision or reach". Though conflict within galamsey was widespread, Kemp et al. (2011),

Cordaid (2009) and IIED (2002) noted that NGOs concentrated on high-profile cases that attracted media and international attention, such as fighting the causes of vulnerable communities against mining companies. Thus, after more than a decade of artisanal gold mining in the Birim North District, an NGO was yet to set up operations there.

7.3 The Crux to Promoting Cooperation and Peace

So far, this chapter has explored the various roles played by mediators and other state and non-state actors in the resolution of conflicts within galamsey. Embedded in the discussion were the fundamentals and approaches of the various actors to resolve disagreements and hostilities. However, the resolution of conflict in galamsey went beyond the roles and approaches adopted by these actors. In this section, the analysis centres on other fundamental aspects in the promotion of peace and cooperation between migrant and host. Analysing the viewpoints of youth miners, the section considers the critical issue of the factors respondents believe to be essential to safeguarding their relationships and ensuring peaceful coexistence.

7.3.1 Shared Goals: The Existence of Superordinate Goals

From observation, it emerged that the miners, both migrants and indigenes, and to a large extent the mining communities, had one common enemy, the government, who had categorised galamsey as illegal and consequently had set up a task force to halt it. As the theory of common enemy goes, "a group of people will be united by a common hatred of a perceived or real external threat" (Anonymous), such that it will cause in-groups[80] to overlook their hatred for each other and organise themselves to face the adversary, resulting in cooperation between the erstwhile conflicting parties. It would not be illogical to submit that a threatening external common enemy would encourage actors within ASM to cooperate and unite in a mutual cause, especially, in this case, to prevent the government and its agencies from any imminent closure of mining sites. However, it was rather the existence of superordinate goals that encouraged the actors within the ASM sector to seek a quick resolution to the conflict. Superordinate goals required strategies to allow parties to transform conflict situations, so that they would "cooperate to obtain mutually desirable outcomes" (Ryan, 2007: 93).

Interactions with respondents revealed that over the years as artisanal miners, they had come to understand the need to broaden their horizons based on shared interest and goals. They recognised that their priority was not their differences, but successful cooperation in ensuring a steady stream of income, a sustainable livelihood and to carry out their activities without any interference from the government. In reality, the actors had come to consider themselves first as Ghanaians and second as galamsey miners or dependents, before giving any recognition to their individual origins or identities. Invariably, superordinate goals provided a reason to cooperate to achieve benefits that would elude them if they pursued individual or group interests. This had created a sense of belonging that

[80] The use of 'in-group' here depicts disparate groups with a common interest, as witnessed in ASM communities.

transcended immediate group identification, interest and need, to address the larger goal of all actors involved.

The respondents described the ever-looming threat of site closures by the government, and hence the loss of potential income, with its inherent negative impact on their lives, on those of their dependents and those of the communities. Thus, their overarching goal was to cooperate to evolve strategies and arrangements with the aggregate effect of reducing hostility and conflict, both on site and in the communities.

After the riots between indigenous youth and migrants from the North, and between other indigenous youth and migrants from Konongo, and the subsequent raids[81] and the closure of galamsey sites by the security agencies, the chiefs of Noyem and Nyafoman (as earlier described) decided to set up mining steering committees. As well as seeing to the day-to-day administration of the sites, these were established to ensure that disputes and hostilities were nipped in the bud. According to the head of the committee in Noyem, they had to learn the hard way that working alongside each other did not necessarily reduce hostility and conflict. After the first swoop, they stipulated that miners could work in any of the pits. This was meant to increase cooperation between indigenes and migrants as they worked together and intermingled. However, it failed, and conflicts escalated.[82] The dramatic rise in conflict, coupled with ghastly injuries inflicted with weapons, was reported in the media and led to the second raid. The 'scatter' resulted in young people, both indigene and migrant, fleeing into the forest. For instance, after the operation of the security agencies, the authorities in Nyafoman realised the effect of the halt in galamsey, not only on the miners, but on socioeconomic activities, and held a meeting with all the actors. It was concluded that the losses incurred by all of them surpassed their differences, and that there was a need to work together as one.

As stated in the previous chapter, the chief and leaders decided that, particularly to protect their economic interests, galamsey had to be managed properly. Among the strategies used were the institution of the committee, the reporting of those engaged in deviant behaviours, and especially in Noyem, the expulsion of persistent offenders from both the mining sites and the community. Tensions between host and migrant reduced considerably as both groups realised that cooperating was a small compromise compared to the life of hardship, deprivation and poverty they would face if galamsey activities were ceased.[83]

[81] The exact dates when these raids took place could not be ascertained, though the respondents indicated that they occurred after the riots.

[82] Similarly, in the original experiment carried out by Sherif (1967: 88), the introduction of contact strategies proved unsuccessful as instead of reducing conflict, close contact "served as occasions for the rival groups to berate and attack each other… They threw paper, food and vile names at each other".

[83] Indeed, there is much evidence to show that superordinate goals have proven useful in bringing different ethnic groups together to undertake activities that mutually benefit them. For example, the UN's Quick Impact

However, the recognition of superordinate goals does not in itself reduce conflict and improve intergroup relations unless the embodying goals are pursued jointly by all parties. As such, the recurrence of conflict meant that some individuals and groups, irrespective of superordinate goals, aimed to pursue their own personal objectives, to the detriment of everyone.

7.3.2 The Committee as an Institution for Peace

In section 7.2.1 I discussed the role of the committee; however, it is important to reflect upon its wider function as an institution established in the wake of hostilities, to establish order in an environment characterised by the absence of the state and its formal institutions as represented by the District Assembly.

As noted in Chapter 5, the ASM economy was characterised by an interplay of migrant and host, who operated and competed in an environment hitherto described as disorderly. On one hand, the transfer of migrants' skills and knowledge, acquired from staying in one galamsey community after another, had led to the division of labour. Accordingly, migrants mooted the idea of a governing body, which partly led to the creation of the committee to supervise operations. On the other hand, the communities, though they had customary rights to the land, lacked the requisite skills to undertake galamsey. Faced with the impasse of allowing migrants in to mine for gold to the disadvantage of the communities and its inhabitants, the leaders formed the committees in collaboration with migrant miners. These committees were entrusted with the responsibility of regulating galamsey, ensuring peace at the sites and collecting the community's share for its development projects.

Finally, the committee, albeit informally[84], was also established to fill a vacuum created by the absence of the state, whose presence was felt only in the form of raids. As well as exhibiting a semblance of authority, the committee had solved a major problem for galamsey in the district. Its chaotic, destructive and antagonistic nature had often compelled members of the host communities to call upon government to curtail its operation. In most cases, opposition to galamsey had come from just a section of the community. However, informal conversations with committee leaders showed that, though galamsey had overall been beneficial to the people, the hostilities it engendered needed to be curtailed to ensure its survival and the stability of the communities. Thus, the committee was also formed to convince indigenes that it could safeguard them from the dangers of galamsey, generate a cordial relationship with migrants and challenge the assumption that galamsey was ungovernable.

Projects Programme (QUIPS) in DR Congo and several conflicting communities has helped cement relationships and set those communities on the path of peace.

[84] According to Schure et al. (2011), informal institutions are critical to the success of ASM as they are governed by "customary laws and practices", though their rules and regulations are "unwritten and arrangements between the actors".

Embedded in the committee was the instituting of rules and regulations and procedures for their enforcement, which were the foundations for the establishment of orderliness and cooperation.[85]

While the arguments for the committee were justified and it did deliver peace and security in the short term, it was plagued by its incapacities. Firstly, it was indigene-biased, made up only of members of the host community. Thus, it was constrained in the delivery of justice as it consistently overlooked offences of indigenous miners, and this undermined its influence in dealing with migrants. Secondly, it was noted that some of the members were self-seeking, only aiming to profit from the toils of the miners and uninterested in the welfare of the operators. The committee had been accused of concentrating its efforts on how much load it could amass, and it had frequently clashed with the miners, who felt that overzealous committee members misused their authority. However, interactions with the head of Nyafoman's mining committee revealed that they had not shirked their responsibilities, especially in terms of safety and security at the sites. He noted that to protect the miners, they provided logs to be used as supports to prevent the pits from caving in. While these committees were not very efficient, they appeared to fulfil their mandate. Despite the absence of the state, they had brought control to galamsey; however, this could be strengthened if the state recognised them and empowered them to act on its behalf.

7.3.3 Using Spirituality to Reduce Conflict

Scholars, especially historians, have noted that with its enigmatic status and curious history, gold's association with spiritualism was reflected in its name, which was derived "from the Greek word aurora - the golden goddess of dawn" (Kollerstrom, 2008: 1). Among the Ashantis of Ghana, gold was not just considered a symbol of power, influence and wealth, but it symbolised the sun, which was associated with the Supreme Being, "Nyankopon" (Annku and Mireku-Gyimah, 2012). The spirituality associated with gold had invoked several taboos and rituals related to mining, and it was believed that when these rules were broken, not only would misfortune befall the communities, but the gods and spirits, as owners of the gold, would hide it.[86] These superstitions had been strengthened by gold deposits found typically around rivers, streams, forests and sacred groves, all believed to be the abodes of the spirit beings, who demanded that a "specific set of rules be observed" (Addei and Amankwah, 2010: 249). The belief, especially among artisanal miners, that gold was the property of the gods, influenced how they carried out their activities (Annku and Mireku-Gyimah, 2012).[87]

[85] Institutions are set up to administer the actions and deeds of individuals and groups in a given community. Using a set of rules and regulations, they play a key role in the establishment and enforcement of social order. As informal institutions, the committee encompasses the customs, traditions and conducts of migrant miners.

[86] The taboos include laughing loudly and playing a radio, which causes the "gold grains to fly away" (Caballero, 1992: 142).

[87] For instance, such beliefs control how digging, extraction and processing activities are undertaken. Addei and Amankwah (2010: 249) hold that the belief has positively influenced ASM, "such as ensuring good environmental stewardship and observation of rest cycles".

The spirituality surrounding gold had been effective in no small measure in reducing conflict at the various mining sites in the Birim North District. Adherents held that gold was placed in various locations by the gods, or that it was itself a spirit and could vanish, at the insistence of the gods or by its own will. Consistent with evidence from other small-scale mining locations, miners in the district believed that gold was a gift from the gods and that they willed it freely to whomever they chose. However, any adverse form of disturbance and noise-making was believed to result in its disappearance. The belief was, therefore, that persistent fighting and violence could potentially lead to the complete disappearance of gold from the communities. Advocates believed, therefore, that desisting from unwarranted disputes and conflicts would avoid the problem of less gold being discovered.

Such claims were defeated by the deafening noise caused by dynamite; however, the artisanal miners believed that by offering animal sacrifices and pouring libations, they could appease the gods, who would lead them to specific rocks that would yield gold in abundance rather than causing its disappearance. To this end, numerous traditional spiritual practices were carried out to 'release' the gold. However, due to the increasing cost of the items for pacification demanded by the fetish priest, the representative of the gods, the miners tried to engage less in noise making, which had been associated with conflict. Scientifically, geologists have explained that folds and faults in the rocks could temporarily cause the gold layer to disappear to another location "due to the change in direction of the orebody" (Addei and Amankwah, 2010: 252), but the miners have interpreted this movement as the disaffection of the gods due to one of the many taboos they may have broken, and have quickly sought to pacify them. The couching of gold in spiritual terms may be attempts by the elders to prevent unwarranted destruction of the environment and the unsustainable exploitation of 'the gifts of the gods'. This was consistent with several of the taboos in the country, which were shrouded in mysticism, and it had to a large extent aided in reducing conflict, especially among those miners who held such views.

However, there was an opposing view that violence leading to the spilling of blood potentially 'releases' more gold, because the gods exult in blood. Though this view was held by a minority, their assertion was made stronger by the discovery of gold in abundance in pits where fellow miners had perished or been injured. In Nyafoman, the particular pit known to the miners as 'Mother' was so extensive that in any one exploitation period no fewer than five gangs, of six miners each, worked in it, and it was continuously mined. However, just a couple of years earlier, it had caved in, killing no fewer than twenty-five miners, and after it was re-opened, the quantity and quality of gold extracted was consistently enormous. Similarly, notwithstanding the fact that women were prohibited from entering the pits because these same gods were reputed to abhor menstrual blood, the claim that bloodshed usually resulted in higher extraction could be exaggerated and may have been used by some of the miners to justify maiming others (see Addei and Amankwah, 2010).

7.3.4 Experiences from Previous Conflicts

The endemic nature of conflict in galamsey would seem to suggest to the outsider that artisanal miners naturally delighted in taunting and challenging each other, which they suffered no repercussions, and that no lessons were learned about participating in conflicts in future. In the initial stages of the fieldwork, most respondents stated that they considered conflict as part of galamsey, and that they had no apprehension or remorse over previous altercations. It was basically business as usual. Yaw, an indigene from Noyem, claimed that he accepted it as part of galamsey, stating that *"I will certainly defend myself and would not worry about the consequences"*[88], indicating that he would confront anyone who hindered him in any way. This view was shared by many, who believed that despite fines, confiscation of loads and even the threat of expulsion from the sites and communities, they quickly forgot about their responsibilities and soon became embroiled in another dispute.

However, despite this it would equally be wrong to suggest that no lessons have been learned from galamsey-related conflicts. Though every conflict was dynamic, was it possible that lessons could be learned so that earlier mistakes were not repeated? (Powell, 2011). With scars on his body serving as a grim reminder of injuries sustained in various disputes, Akwasi, who had resolved not to become embroiled in conflict again, was among those who believed that these conflicts, as well as the bad name they gave to galamsey, had the potential to hurt relationships, maim lives and lead to the destruction of properties. He explained that:

> *I have resolved not to engage in these fights as I am the breadwinner for my family and will not want to jeopardise their livelihood, especially my kids'. If I am not there, there will be no one to take care of them" (Interview, Host galamsey operator (1), Noyem, 22/07/14).*

Another important lesson that had dissuaded respondents from engaging in conflict was that it bred mistrust and enmity, creating many hazards at the sites. Manu, a gang leader on one of the sites in Nyafoman, reported that after several years of working as a galamsey miner and having witnessed the repercussions of conflict, he had learned to swiftly settle misunderstanding tactfully, so that the parties involved did not harbour negative feelings. Quoting the adage that 'experience is the best teacher', he believed that with his wealth of experience in galamsey he could relate to the aggression of most of the younger miners, and could advise them that there was no winner in conflict. He stated further that he could tell them that people who had been involved in disputes rarely forget about it, and that they were likely to rekindle hostilities at another time. Similarly, other respondents stressed the importance of every miner deciding not to engage in conflict because, apart from it bringing no benefit, it was pointless and could lead to mutilation or even death, and this would defeat the purpose of travelling to undertake galamsey. As well as showing their injuries, some of the respondents recounted past conflicts from previous locations and the detrimental consequences for them and their dependents. Those from the North told harrowing tales of tribal, ethnic and chieftaincy conflicts

[88] Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (18), Nyafoman, 01/08/14.

depriving them of quality education, ending their hopes of ever attaining a successful livelihood and practically destroying their communities. One such respondent stated that:

> *Though the conflicts here have not been very vicious, it is the common ones that fester and become violent. Considering the impacts of ethnic and religious conflicts in the north, I don't encourage others or myself to take part in disputes or get involved in any issue that may lead to them. Also, the sample tends to disappear as gold doesn't like quarrels and heated arguments, thus it is best we all limit the extent of conflicts on site (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (51), Nyafoman, 21/09/14).*

Though during the interviews these migrants from the North expressed much concern and frustration over conflicts preventing their progress in life, especially as they had lived through conflict for a major part of their lives, they were seen by indigenes as more violent, and indeed, they were instrumental in the first ever host-migrant galamsey-related conflict in the district. This could be attributed partly, but not entirely, to the fact that because of their past experiences, conflict was a spontaneous response to any form of aggression.

Other respondents brought up economic consequences as lessons to prevent future conflict, including loss of income, medical costs, the cost of replacing damaged equipment, the suspension of mining activities and, in extreme cases, the closure of sites by the government. Aside from the disruption of plans, there was no doubt that conflict had led to significant income losses, which even during periods of harmony could not be guaranteed. One of the respondents said:

> *I have learned that in galamsey one should be cautious, and consider the financial harm that will befall you and the difficulties that your family might go through because of your inability to work. These are the reasons I don't engage in conflict. Someone might insult you, but you just have to walk away (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (16), Noyem, 01/08/14).*

Having witnessed pit closures by the government, many respondents feared that persistent conflicts would cause the permanent closing of the sites. During discussions, it was found that the operations of the security agencies had targeted young men disproportionately, and that the cost of extricating oneself from the law could deplete funds saved for future projects and even lead to debt when they had to borrow to pay bribes and fines to free themselves. As already discussed, though galamsey was a migratory activity, the anxiety of relocating and the difficulty in starting afresh made the miners realise that conflicts were pointless, and that they set one back from achieving future goals. Respondents who had been involved in multiple moves told of the struggle of having to either relocate with the family or constantly shuffle between work locations and family residencies, with the added problem of the unpredictability of success.

While most respondents said that conflicts only perpetuated further antagonism and that they would dissuade their fellow miners from persistently getting involved, what they said varied greatly from how they acted. Observations revealed that there were some who still preferred to use violence to settle conflicts, and even when issues had been settled, the need to exact revenge was paramount, especially among the younger members.

7.3.5 Intermarriages and Associations

Traditionally, marriage brings two individuals and their families together (Foster, 2000); however, intermarriages extended beyond families to connect the two individuals with a much larger group than that to which they belonged. Thus, intermarriages potentially created a link with family and friends, thereby promoting social cohesion (Smits, 2010). Similarly, Nottemeyer (2015: 1) noted that intermarriages helped "build bridges between social groups and bring multi-ethnic societies closer together". Indeed, as Smits (2010) showed, intermarriage could be an important measure of the state of relations among groups in a society. Its prevalence would be indicative of tolerance for each other and the quality of the relationship, while groups that did not permit intermarriages may indicate a hint of antagonism. In that vein, it could be argued that a reduction in conflict and an improvement in social cohesion were expected in societies within which intermarriages were prevalent.[89]

Generally, respondents indicated that *ceteris paribus*, intermarriages could reduce conflicts between host and migrant, reasoning that it would be impossible to engage in a fight with one's in-laws. Yaw, a migrant, pointed out that his marriage to an indigene had cemented his relationship with his in-laws, which he considered very cordial, and that he was accepted by the Akoase community. As well as the recognition that he was part of the community, he felt that his marriage had largely given him free rein to carry out his activities without hindrance. Indeed, it would be strange to treat one's in-laws badly because it would create tension at home and result in alienation from the extended family and friends, with the benefits associated with the union being lost (Paluck, 2009).

Significantly, while there were clear benefits to individuals, especially to migrants and the wider society, some of the respondents were wary of recommending romantic relationship as a remedy to violence, saying that it could lead to violence. One of the participants in a migrant FGD at the Nyafoman site stated that:

> *It can help in some situations and in others can even make it worse. For example, there was one case, when a migrant pursued a girl, not knowing that she had been in a relationship with an indigene which had broken down. So, when a seemingly innocent scuffle occurred, it was blown out of proportion because of the imminent rivalry between them (FGD, Nyafoman, 24/07/14).*

Also, they said that the interconnectedness may be limited to just the two families and would not have any effect on others, even on acquaintances. Especially among the Akans in Ghana, blood could be interpreted as family, (*abusua baako ye mogya baako*)[90], as could money (*sika ye mogya*)[91] (Barte, 1982), in this case gold, so that anyone not related to the immediate family may not be accorded any

[89] As Kioko and Bollig (2015) found, intermarriages between Kikiyu and Massai tribesmen, two warring groups, largely led to the development of peaceful relations, not only among immediate family members but among their friends and even their neighbours.

[90] Meaning one's matrilineage is one's blood

[91] Meaning money is blood

privileges. Hence the mere fact of being attached to another through marriage might not preclude two individuals or groups from engaging in disputes.

However, the respondents stated that associations and affiliations on sites and in communities had more scope to promote cohesion, and consequently were more effective in reducing conflict. In most communities in the country, it was common to find associations based on the identity of their founding members or on the programme that they were working on. It was thus not uncommon to find associations based on rights of birth (Lentz, 2007) or on other characteristics such as age, place of origin, school, activities, etc. While the respondents identified no clear preferential characteristic, the general narrative was one of common interest.[92] The most obvious advantage was a platform to participate; but there were many others, including the development of personal and interpersonal communication skills, and an arena where members could receive information and education on safe practices. Despite believing that association would not eradicate conflict entirely from galamsey, the respondents opined that they could help reduce it to a large extent. Moreover, they acknowledged that attempts at forming associations had failed, largely because of the constant state of flux. But they believed that joint activities, such as playing games and holding fora and discussions, could cement the relationship between host and migrant, and present a positive image of galamsey to the outside world.

Despite extolling the advantages of associations, respondents stated that they had not been able to form an all-encompassing association of galamsey miners, since they were made up of disparate groups which potentially catered for individual groups' interests. However, they cautioned that associations could be counterproductive, especially if the culprits were in opposing associations. Furthermore, they acknowledged that whether conflict could be reduced would be largely dependent on the positions of the aggressors and the reasons for the conflict. For instance, if the struggle was over a rich portion of land, nothing less than the presence of the committee would suffice to stop it.

7.3.6 Proximity and Interactions

The respondents suggested that proximity and interactions had the potential to engender closer ties and reduce conflict. Initially, when the migrant galamsey operators arrived in the communities, only a few were able to rent rooms from the host, while the less fortunate slept anywhere they could, from school verandas to the patios of houses. Over time, some moved into their own accommodation and formed their own commune, as observed with the Achiasefomu migrant enclave in Noyem. The host communities, with mild reservations, allowed the migrant miners to stay wherever they found suitable accommodation, and mixed freely with them. Significantly, as well as binding the community and smoothing relationships over time, living closely together also eliminated security concerns. It was

[92] Lentz (2009: 42) found that associations represent interest groups operating within defined "boundaries and cultural particularities of the community they claim to represent".

observed that those who preferred to live in isolation or in enclaves indulged in all sorts of deviant behaviours, such as drugs and other social vices, and this was frowned upon by community leaders. An ex-assemblyman in Noyem indicated that at the onset of galamsey, the community felt that the migrants should be relocated to the uninhabited parts (now Achiasefomu), but after persistent troubles and confrontations they realised they had made a mistake. He stated that therefore:

> *Migrants should always be encouraged to live among people in the community rather than in their own quarters. We should see ourselves as one people rather than having a main section for the host and a separate section for migrants. This doesn't bode well for the development of the community (Personal Communication, Ex-assemblyman, Noyem, 10/11/14).*

They also conceded that aside from enclaves harbouring miscreants, this environment was neglected and lacked development. The Achiasefomu enclave epitomised this; it was lacking basic amenities, filthy and very noisy compared to the section inhabited by indigenes. Both migrant and indigene respondents claimed to prefer living together than in isolation from each other. Responses that resonated revealed that when people were closer and interacted frequently, the intensity of quarrels was quite low. For instance, gangs who had worked in the same pit for a long time interacted more easily and became friends over time. They also settled disputes more quickly than gangs who were not familiar with each other.

> *Frequent interaction with a person or a gang or closeness to one another can go a long way to reduce conflict. A fight can be more easily resolved between two people who know each other than between those who are not familiar with each other (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (45), Akoase, 19/09/14).*

While acknowledging that proximity and interaction were not a panacea for the reduction of conflict, respondents admitted that intensity was reduced considerably when individuals and gangs had frequent interactions. Also, it proffered some advantages, especially for migrants, in that living together meant being known in the community and being exempted from blame when there were problems with migrants. In addition, the host was more likely to come to the aid of the migrants when a mishap befell them.

7.4 Acculturation Opportunities

This section critically addresses the question of how migrant artisanal miners and their host, with distinct cultural backgrounds, interact and discover that altering their positions and characteristics could lead to a harmonious relationship. Though the potential for conflict cannot be entirely eliminated by the process of acculturation,[93] the tenet of this concept hinges on the changes made and strategies undertaken by individuals and groups to adapt to the dominant group's culture.

> *The decision to migrate was an easy one, however, wondering what the next day holds has been my worry. But it's not that bad even if the community does not accept you. I will keep my own culture, but to be accepted in the community I will not practice it here,*

[93] See Richmond (1993: 1) who suggested that it covers "a continuum between reactive and proactive".

but try to learn and observe their do's and don'ts (Interview, Migrant galamsey operator (26) Ewinso, outskirt of Noyem, 13/08/14).

Like everyone else, we came to earn a living and to maximise our hard work, because there is no stability in galamsey. Because we undertake galamsey with the community and they have accepted us, it is quite easy to adapt to their cultural practices. I believe that migrants like me should at best learn to communicate in the language of the host or at least have an intermediate or basic fluency. This, I think, would make it easier to communicate with a wider section of the galamsey populace, and most importantly, the host (FGD, Migrants, Akoase, 01/08/14).

These were examples of common responses on what migrants could do to be accepted by the host on one hand, and on the other hand, what the host would consent to as best practices on the part of the migrants so that they would accept them. It is essential to realise that when individuals decide to move, they do not shed their beliefs and practices, but importantly, they influence how they act and express themselves in their new environment. This leads to a process of "moving towards, moving against and moving away from a stimulus" as the two distinct cultures clash (Bhugra, 2004:134). The subsequent changes will correspond either to adaptation or to renunciation. As well as undertaking galamsey, migrants found suitable living spaces and carried out their daily activities within these communities. They invariably came into contact with the host and interacted on a daily basis. However, though migrants had no option but to adapt to the culture of the host, in reality the respective cultures of both host and migrant did undergo some changes.[94]

Acculturation has been a solution for artisanal miners who grew up in a different district, with a distinct culture, in adapting to a new one (Akinde, 2013). While for some, acculturation may be a problem, others had been able to adopt the practices of the host with ease. Indeed, most of the respondents had no issue with adopting the host's culture and speaking their language, since they felt that it improved the likelihood of their being accepted as part of the community. Similarly, others believed that to keep the peace, it was critical to abide by the norms and practices of the host. Generally, they held that as well as facilitating their proper integration into the community, it led to a sense of belonging and we-feeling.

Some indigenes had difficulty in accepting migrants within their community and felt that, given a choice, migrants would not identify with the indigenous culture, but that they were compelled to do so as a means to an end. However, most were enthusiastic about migrants' eagerness to acculturate into their community. Though they did not insist that migrants adopt all aspects of their culture, they believed that if they were not to be alienated, they should try to adopt the most salient of their practices.

A person's way of life is embedded in the individual and it is difficult to change overnight. They can keep theirs, but should try to learn ours, especially the most important and obvious ones (Interview, Host galamsey operator (15), Noyem, 12/08/14).

[94]The acculturation process often entails learning of languages, changing of food preferences, adapting to health and sex norms and modifying dress codes (Berry, 2005).

> *To foster integration, the migrants should make an effort to embrace and participate in the customs and practices of the community (Interview, Host galamsey operator (16), Nyafoman, 13/08/14)).*

However, though most of the host believed that migrants could keep some aspects of their culture and way of life, especially the educative ones, they cautioned that migrants should not engage in practices that were obtrusive and corruptive, since the younger members of the communities were more likely to be influenced by such practices.[95] The majority of respondents from the community claimed that galamsey's popular culture, which included their mode of dress, indulgence in alcohol and drugs and general distasteful conduct, could be copied by their children and youth. In a similar study, Akinde (2013) found that though the younger youth acculturated differently from older youth, these differences were not very substantial. However, he showed a significant difference in ways of acculturation between youth and adults. While the youth were adventurous and sought new experiences and knowledge, thus were more willing to embrace different cultures, adults were largely set in their ways and often unwilling to change. Similarly, among the migrants, the younger youth made friends and intermingled easily, accepting the host's culture and not strictly adhering to their own. However, contrary to Akinde's evidence (2013), older youth and adult migrants were not indifferent, but fully observed the customs and practices of the host communities. All indications show that the older and more experienced miners helped the younger ones to adjust and encouraged them to fully participate in the practices of the host, such as observing taboo days and partaking in communal labour.

Also, the duration of stay in the host communities determined the extent of acculturation. Migrants who stayed for longer periods or decided to settle permanently were more likely to fully acculturate than those who intended to move back to their own communities after a couple of years. Both migrants and hosts agreed that if the former intended to stay permanently, they were obliged to adopt the customs and values of the host. However, those who intended to stay for short periods could, minimally, abide by the host's practices. Indeed, it was common to observe that some of the migrants had acquired plots of land and were at various stages of building houses. Some had adopted the district as their second home, travelling to neighbouring districts to undertake galamsey but returning from time to time. For this group, full acculturation was a must. Most who stated that they were in the district temporarily did no more than to abide by the culture of the host while they maintained their own, but they were careful not to flaunt those practices that infringed on the host's.

In a similar vein, some of the migrants adopted only some aspects of the host's culture, such as their language and belief system, but kept some aspects of their own, such as food, way of life, dress and music. The respondents considered the beliefs and the language of the host to be the most important;

[95] Generally, research shows that young people are more likely to adopt the cultural practices and norms of other groups than adults, who are likely to experience some difficulties (Schwartz et al., 2010).

observance or adoption of these could pave the way for easy integration and communication. Other customs, such as food preferences and music, which had been inculcated for the greater part of their lives, were very difficult to discard.

The size of the migrant population in relation to the host community also had an influence on the extent of acculturation. It was inferred that though there were no strict laws obliging migrants to adhere to the host's beliefs and practices, the small migrant population in Nyafoman was more likely to adapt, whereas those in Noyem, which had a lot of migrants and an enclave, were less likely to do so. Informal interactions with inhabitants of both communities revealed that with such a large migrant population in Noyem, the community had been overwhelmed in its attempts to make them adapt, and frequently accused them of disrespecting their customs. In Nyafoman, the community had less difficulty with migrants since their smaller numbers made it fairly easy to know who was violating their customs and practices.

Lastly, because most migrant artisanal miners originated from the same region, which was mainly Akan-speaking, there were similarities in their customs and practices and they could acculturate with ease, only observing those practices specific to these mining communities. However, those from other regions, especially the north, with different cultural practices, did not fare any worse. For instance, with regard to the host's language, Twi was widely spoken throughout the country and the respondents spoke with varying levels of fluency. Most indicated that they learned the language in their own communities or in galamsey communities where they had worked previously. However, most of them found it difficult to adapt to the community's traditional spiritual beliefs. For instance, those from the north were mainly Muslims and Catholics, and they found it difficult to adhere to the taboos of the host, finding them archaic.

So far much of the discussion has focused on how both host and, especially, migrant, adapt culturally to ensure harmony. However, acculturation involves not only cultural alterations, but also psychological changes that occur because of interaction between host and migrant groups.[96] Though most respondents indicated their contentment with how they had adjusted and understood the inherent positive impacts, they could not identify any positive psychological changes that accompanied acculturation. However, these changes may not be without their inherent problems, labelled as 'acculturative stress' (see Berry, 2005). Nonetheless, respondents could not identify any specific issues of stress, either culturally or psychologically. Enquiries revealed that youth experienced less stress, since they adapted easily to the practices of the host, such as learning the language and blending in. While the literature suggests that migrants suffer significantly from emotional detachment due to being away from their families (Junhyoung et al., 2012), the migrants taking part in this study had suffered no emotional loss. While it was unclear why they had not suffered much stress

[96] Berry (2005: 702) provides examples of psychological changes as "a sense of well-being or self-esteem".

from relocating, their immediate conclusion was that since most of them had joined family and friends and had quickly joined their gangs, they had become emotionally attached to them and had gained reassurance from the bond shared. Similarly, the overall migration experience, including the opportunity structures and the receptiveness of the host community, had generally reduced any apprehension for the migrants, while at the same time making it easier for them to adapt. However, most of them indicated that conforming meant having to compromise on several issues. For instance, observing 'breaking days', which prohibited work on Tuesdays and Fridays in Nyafoman and Noyem respectively, meant a loss of a day's earnings every week.

However, the process of acculturation had generally been positive for respondents, since they said that they had gained more financially than they would have done in a chaotic environment. For the migrants, this meant that they could earn more than they ever had in their home communities. The narrative that emerged is of positive experiences, such as indulgence in new lifestyles, food and entertainment, shared by migrant and host, as well as freedom, convenience and financial liberation.

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have taken a critical look at the attempts put in place by the actors to reduce conflict and bring some sanity to galamsey. It is divided into four sections: first I examined how youth migrant miners had responded to conflicts. I showed that while a few had resisted attempts by the host to subjugate them and had fought back, most found adaptive measures that lessened attacks from the host. These measures had enhanced their positions in the communities and given them the freedom to continue their operations. While these measures had been spontaneous, they had not done enough to reduce conflicts. In the second section, I illustrated what and who had the capacity to mediate in conflict. I identified the types of conflict and the actors best suited to arbitrate. I went on to undertake an in-depth analysis of the role of those at the apex of galamsey, including the mining committees and traditional leaders, in conflict resolution. Also, I told of the visible absence of the state and NGOs in galamsey.

In the third section, I argued that while structured roles could be found to aid the resolution of conflicts, they had been reinforced with processes that were instrumental in reducing conflicts and preserving peace. Among the measures were the discernment of mutual benefit of cooperation and the institution of the committees, and these had been fundamental in reducing hostilities. For instance, though committee's efforts had been blighted by inefficiencies and self-interest, they were accorded much respect and were seen as an institution of law enforcement. I showed that other measures contributed, including the belief in supernatural forces that give and take away gold, reminders of past altercations and the combined effect of intermarriages and group affiliations.

In the final section, I look at issues that address practices and mannerisms that both host and migrants had adjusted to, to ensure a continued harmonious relationship. I showed that both groups had carried

out some adjustments, though migrants were obligated to negotiate their integration with the host. In the next and final chapter, I present my conclusion to this thesis.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion

8.0 Introduction

This study is contextually set against the conditions within a typical ASM community where migrants interact with the host in the pursuit of their activities. This section presents a summary of the major findings of the study, which will contribute to the theme of relationships among actors not only within the ASM sector but in the mining sector. Imperatively, it seeks to accomplish this by linking the research questions to the empirical evidence presented in the previous chapters. Furthermore, it seeks to both reinforce and challenge the existing literature on the migration of youth into artisanal mining camps, on issues relating to conflicts and on how peace is brokered among stakeholders. Highlighting the perception of young people's part in the dynamics of conflict between migrant miners and the host communities, the final part of the section elucidates policy implications which may influence stakeholders in enhancing relationships and in finding a lasting solution to the persistent conflicts that have beset the ASM subsector.

8.1 Summary

The study sets out to investigate the migration-conflict nexus within the context of youth migration to ASM communities in the Birim North District of Ghana. It identifies the nature and form of migration in the country, reveals that young people constitute the largest part of the migrant population, and shows that the inclination of most migrants is to move internally, with rural areas as their ultimate destination. It also identifies the reasons and motivations for migration among young people in ASM communities in Ghana, and the sources of information that influence their choice of destination. Furthermore, it explores the relationships among migrant youth miners, indigenous miners and general members of the host communities in the district. It particularly seeks to know how migrant miners relate to each other, how they engage with members of the host communities and how they identify forms of discrimination and ascription. The study also explores in depth the nature of conflict in galamsey, critically examining the relevant issues that generate conflict among migrant and host miners. It examines how conflicts are mitigated, and considers the roles of the various actors in galamsey in conflict resolution.

While the concept of migration in Ghana has been studied extensively, and while migration into mineral-rich areas has not been a recent phenomenon, it is only recently that researchers have touched on the nexus between migration and conflict in these mineral-rich regions. Although this field is gaining some attention, the nature of the relationship between ASM operators and indigenous mining communities has been relatively unexplored. Moreover, only cursory consideration has been given to conflict between migrant miners and members of the host communities. Similarly, the subject of youth, migration and ASM has been sparsely investigated and scattered among several fields of study

such as geography, history, economics, cultural and social psychology and development studies. As well as seeking to answer pertinent questions about the concepts of youth, migration, ASM and conflict, this study aims to fill the relevant gaps in the literature and stimulate further debate on the relationships among stakeholders in the mining sector, and especially about host-migrant relationship within ASM communities.

Relying on a qualitative methodology, with semi-structured interviews, observations, focus group discussions and key informants as the principal methods of investigation, the study poses questions about the motivation to migrate, the relationship between migrant and host, issues that generate conflict, and lastly, how peace is attained.

The study shows that the ASM economy in the district is characterised by an interplay between migrant and host and that essentially, the current state of galamsey, including the nature and state of technology, is due to the significant influence of migrants. The study also finds that ASM is generally a migratory activity and that most of those currently mining in the district have been involved in multiple migrations, moving from one mining camp to another across the country. Moreover, their movements have been predicated, among other things, on the information that they received about the prospects of a new mining strike. The sources of information include reports from family and friends, news that they had sourced from the media and rumours. Similarly, those who were undertaking galamsey in the district for the first time were mostly influenced by the information they received from friends and family members already engaged in the sector.

Poverty has been pinpointed as the overarching motivation for youth migration into ASM, and this has been taken for granted in most studies. However, this study finds that aside from their very challenging and often limited financial positions, most of the young people have moved due to the oppressive life of rural areas, which severely constrains and limits the opportunities available to them. Other factors include their lack of interest in agriculture; unemployment and underemployment; the need for business capital; debt; and the death of the family breadwinner. Also, notwithstanding the finding that these migrations are rationally thought out, respondents cite the element of chance, having taken the chance to leave their previous situations in the hope that migrating might prove successful. More than twelve percent of the respondents indicate that “taking a chance” was what motivated them to migrate. While this might not seem to be a rational action, respondents reason that is a rational choice in circumstances where their lives could not get any worse. The choice they face is between staying in perpetual poverty with limited opportunities and finding success, or at worst, seeing no improvement in their livelihoods.

Much of the discussion about ASM gives the impression that artisanal miners and the host communities are homogenous. However, the information presented in the previous sections shows what most discussions overlook: that ASM as a migratory activity involves members of the host

communities working alongside migrants, and that there is often an interaction between the two. Working within this heterogeneous context and despite their inherent differences, these young migrant miners have coexisted largely through the relationships they have forged over the years. The relationships among members of gangs are mostly centred on trust and a sense of fairness encompassing belonging, reciprocity, equality and proportional work, among other things. Moreover, the nature of the gang and the resultant deepening of their relationships is such that they have developed a sense of belonging and oneness to overcome feelings of loneliness and imposed identities as 'migrants', 'strangers' etc. However, though the bond of friendship has lasted through multiple movements among mining communities over the years, there has been occasional friction among miners, which has tended to dissipate the cultivated relationship and mar the working environment. Often, disgruntled members have left their gangs, either to work on their own or to form new alliances.

Similarly, since these migrants find themselves in communities which may or may not share sociocultural features with their place of origin, there is no doubt that they have to negotiate their relationship with the host. However, how peaceful or antagonistic this working relationship is, depends on how the host responds to the migrants' gestures. Generally, as stipulated by the theories of intergroup relations, whenever two or more groups come together, they establish a relationship, and in this case, the migrants are obligated to forge a relationship with the host. To a large extent, this guarantees their continued stay and the freedom to carry out their activities in the communities. However, the host is at liberty to accept or reject migrants based on the perceived and/or actual benefits or disadvantages of allowing migrants into their midst. The relationship between the host and migrants could be anything from antagonism to peace, and this basically depends on the host. However, this study finds that it is not the host alone that dictates the nature of the relationship. Most theories fail to consider this, perhaps because studies have been carried out in an experimental environment. Migrants, too, have been able to steer the relationship in their favour by virtue of their material and technological know-how. However, the skewedness of this relationship lasts only until the host has gained an advantage through the acquisition of the requisite experience. Initially, with a few exceptions, the host welcomes migrants for the perceived benefits to individuals and to the communities at large. These benefits are evident in the number of developments that have taken place in the communities and the relative increase in the standard of living since the inception of galamsey.

However, the critical challenges of ASM for Ghana and for many mineral-rich West African countries have been to overcome its negative impacts, promote its positive effects and make advances towards enhancing sustainable development. But the negative effects, including but not limited to conflict, have overshadowed any potential for a positive image. However, despite the pervasiveness of conflicts, attention has centred on the often-volatile relationship between ASM communities and miners on one hand and mining companies and government on the other (Hinton, 2005). While such

attention is not misplaced, due attention has not been accorded to conflicts among the miners and within ASM communities, and they have not come to international attention. The informal and illegal nature of ASM has led to violence and a culture of impunity, resulting in personal injuries, exposure to hazards, tensions and threats to community stability. Most of this has not been covered by the media.

Despite the illegality of the activity, miners operate openly, though wary of strangers, under the authority of the traditional leaders. However, there are several issues of conflict between the host and migrant miners in the study area, which perhaps suggests that the galamsey terrain is riddled with conflict and anxiety. While others have submitted that it centres on envy, jealousy or a synthesis of the two (see Collier, 2000 and Le Billion, 2001), the host are irked into attacking migrants and vice versa. Part of the reason is economical, with theories citing competition for economic resources and opportunities as triggers of conflicts between host and migrants. Clearly, within the ASM sector in the Birim North District, competition for space often leads to disagreements and conflicts between host and migrants. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that no gang has exclusive rights to any pit, thus prosperous pits are the subject of persistent agitation. The situation is further compounded by the host miners' deep-seated suspicion of migrants. This is based on the perception that landowners favour them when allocating land, motivated by the promise of increased earnings because of the migrant's prolificacy in galamsey.

Another factor is the inherent differences of social identity. The respondents are emphatic that these differences do not matter; however, the host referring to migrants as 'visitors' or 'strangers' reveals a certain abhorrence to those who are not indigenous and who have no links to the community exploiting what belongs to the host. While there is no overt discrimination, there is ridicule, especially for those from the north, labelled as "Pepefo", and there is subtle discrimination from the host. Everything vice-related in the communities is blamed on migrants, such as the rise in teenage pregnancies, drug and alcohol abuse, truancy, lack of respect, and the quest for material gain at the expense of sustainability of community resources and the environment. This accusation is made by a section of indigenes who claim that these vices were foreign to the host communities prior to the inception of galamsey.

The question was whether there was an element of host-migrant conflict. The answer is yes, though it is not overly fierce. These conflicts have occasionally been violent, but have not resulted in the destruction of the host communities or marred the relationship between host and migrants. This may perhaps be due to the interdependence of the actors and the institution of the committees or the fear of raids from the anti-galamsey task force. Or perhaps, as is suggested, it is due to the migratory nature of galamsey. With migrants in a constant state of flux, they can move away before disputes and hostilities can escalate to the intensity that has been witnessed in natural resource-inspired conflicts.

Another question is whether conflicts within galamsey can ever be eradicated. Galamsey and conflicts are intertwined insofar as there is a mix of migrants and host working in the same location. This is exacerbated by the winner-takes-all principle, which results in the miners with the best piece of land or pit experiencing a transformation in their lives and their standing in society. This is certainly a recipe for disaster, compounded by the disobeying of rules and regulations and intense competition over access. Though the mining committees have gone a long way in reducing conflicts, there are subtle undercurrents which could lead to escalation. This is partly due to the decline in the extraction of gold, which is limited by the current depths of the pits. Respondents report that most of the pits have been mined to depths that require the use of machines and pulleys to access the gold layers, and that there is intense struggle over accessible layers. Also, the combined effect of the declining fortunes of galamsey and the consequent effect on the community, the increased cost of living, and the increase in social vices perceived to have been caused by migrants, have all added to feelings of resentment.

Confronted by an environment in which they are portrayed as strangers or visitors, and in a bid to reduce disagreements, these young migrants have not counterattacked but have chosen to adapt by allowing the host access to the pits whenever they are antagonised. Also, they have forged alliances with members of the host communities to avert any potential attacks, and they have chosen to perform various tasks for the host in the hope that this will be reciprocated.

Lastly, while the committee and the traditional authorities have played a pivotal role in reducing conflicts, there is a conspicuous absence of third-party agents such as the District Assembly and NGOs. The research found that the miners generally prefer the informal system of conflict resolution, presided over by traditional leaders and the committee, to the police and the formal court system, which they find to be adversarial, intolerant and intimidating. Similarly, while it is noted that the state is largely absent, there is evidence to suggest that the District Assembly is aware of galamsey in the area. Occasionally, an agent of the state has visited the sites, and some even claim the collusion of some politicians even though galamsey is illegal. Furthermore, although superordinate goals and spirituality have played a major role in dissipating conflicts, it has become increasingly evident that acts of violence within ASM will increase, especially as more people become involved, unless concrete steps are taken to remedy the issue. However, crucially, respondents claim that a galamsey association and more involvement from the state could combine to mitigate conflict. This can only be realised if the government creates an environment in which galamsey can be regulated.

In conclusion, this study reveals that the portrayal of the relationship between local communities and artisanal miners as wholly harmonious (see Fig 1, p3) does not reflect reality in the study area. Indeed, it is emphasised that artisanal miners are not a homogeneous group, but are made up of several disparate groups of host and migrants, who compete for rich gold-laden pits in the same locality.

While there are genuine periods of harmony, these are interspersed with episodes of disputes and violence. Despite the socio-economic benefits of coexisting, conflicts, as posited in the theories adopted for this study, are inevitable. However, though they have led to injuries, some of which have been life-threatening, they have not ended galamsey or ripped apart the communities. The study reveals that legitimate processes have been instituted to purge galamsey of conflicts, including the formation of mining committees and arbitration by chiefs and elders. Though these processes have not eliminated conflict entirely, they have to a large extent reduced the chaotic environment that was hitherto associated with galamsey. The absence of the state and other third party agents has not helped in this endeavour, and there is a need for their involvement, not only to eradicate conflict but to curb the disorganised nature of galamsey.

8.2 Theoretical Implications

In the theoretical chapter (Chapter 4), the key theories which framed the study and delineated the underlying concepts essential for understanding host-migrant relations and conflicts were discussed. The issue of conflict was presented as central to this study; however, it was facilitated by, firstly, examining the relationship between the host and migrants and lastly, exploring opportunities for peace. The empirical analysis presented in chapters 5, 6, and 7 also provided various insights, some confirming and/or seeking a review of the theories employed.

Before beginning this thesis, I was certain of the inherent futility of conflict, especially considering the repercussions for personal safety and the security and wellbeing of any community and its members. Indeed, it would have been easy to agree with Parsons that conflict is a disease with disruptive and dysfunctional effects. However, such a conclusion fails to account for the dynamics of conflict that I observed and learned about from responses during the period of investigation. Firstly, it does not explain why, after protracted episodes of violence within ASM, the number of people (especially migrants) that join galamsey camps has been rising. Secondly, neither does it explain why ASM communities have not disintegrated after periods of pervasive conflict and environmental ruin. Despite the prevalence of conflict among the miners, especially between host and migrant miners, I agree with the view postulated by Marx and exposited by Shantz (1987) and Wieviorka (2013). They view conflict as synonymous with change, adaptation and development, such that it is a dynamic action of a functional society that leads to progress and development. However, there is the caveat that it has to be managed constructively.

In all instances of conflict between two parties, there has to be an established relationship, which are based on interactions economically, socially or both. The empirical analysis supports this argument and shows that within the artisanal mining sites and communities in the study area, there is an assemblage of the host and migrants, who have coexisted and established a relationship which outcomes are mutually beneficial to the two. While this is consistent with the theories; for example,

van Kippenberg (2002) makes the case that the quality of intergroup relation is dependent on the relationship between the groups. However, the aspect of forming a relationship between the two parties is not dealt with prominence in the theories. For instance, when Sherif et al. (1961) empirically tested the Realist Group Conflict Theory (RGCT), they wrote that the group of boys used for the experiment had no pre-existing relationship, however, "when they were made aware of each other's presence", a distinction of "us" and "them" arose. This may be an indication that the central tenets of the theories are not on the relationships that are formed between the groups, but rather on goal incompatibilities and conflicts. However, there is an implied notion that when groups come together, some sort of relationship is established.

Conflict is the central position of this study. The argument throughout this study has focused on exploring issues of conflict between migrants and the host in ASM and employed intergroup relations and conflict theories to support this argument. While the theories are postulated from different standpoints,[97] they converge to a central position that the interactions between an ingroup and the outgroup lead to conflict. The analysis presented in chapter six reveals the triggers of host-migrant conflict in ASM, however, none of the theories could entirely explain the triggers of host-migrant conflicts. The Instrumental Model of Group Conflict (IMGC) which combines the main tenets of RGCT and SIT comes close to explaining the causes of conflict. However, it is the combination of the central arguments of all the theories which fully explains the cause of host-migrant conflict in the study area.

RGCT, arguing from an economic standpoint, postulates that competition is the basis of conflict between the ingroup and the outgroup. If that is the case, then it is not sufficient to explain the dynamics of conflicts; in particular, as conflict can occur between members of the ingroup or the outgroup. Empirical evidence gathered shows that there are persistent conflicts between the gangs irrespective of where they hailed from. There are even instances where conflicts have arisen between members of the same gang. However, these conflicts intensify when they occur between a host and migrant. Clearly, using RGCT as the only explanatory theory of the cause of host-migrant conflict is not enough. Similarly, adopting only SIT, where groups are differentiated as "us" and "them" does not fully explain the cause of host-migrant conflict. Indeed, it was observed that there were other migrants in the communities, who were not involved in ASM, such as those who sold merchandise and consumables, but their presence did not lead to conflict.

However, the combination of competition and salience as advanced by IMGC provides a justifiable basis for host-migrant conflict in ASM. The model contends that the competition over economic resources is a sufficient, but not a necessary condition of conflict. Rather the inclusion of salience of

[97] For example: RGCT from an economic approach, SIT based on social distinctions and Acculturation places emphasis on cultural norms, customs and practices.

the group potentially fuels conflicts. On reflection, the authors are, however, quick to point out that salience is not only about distinctiveness, such as black and white, but that it can be about something that distinguishes the group such as the size of the outgroup. Thus, there is a possibility that a competitive large outgroup is seen as a potential threat by the ingroup. The analysis reveals that though the majority of migrants were not ethnically distinctive from the host, the cause of conflict is not only because they are not from the community but also their large presence tends to crowd out indigenes. Indigenes felt that migrants, who had the skill in mining, had also been given same unlimited access to their land, thus giving them an advantage over them. Thus, migrants were a serious threat to their sustenance, and must be eliminated. The evidence found is consistent with the postulation of IMGC.

Acculturation, though not inherently a conflict theory, prescribes the consequences of host-migrant integration. The theory holds that when two groups come together, there is a culture clash as each group holds onto their specific cultures, values, and personalities. The groups can, however, agree to live peacefully, characterised by integration or assimilation or co-exist in conflict, characterised by marginalisation or separation. The empirical findings are, largely, though not entirely, consistent with which outcomes to expect as expressed by the theory. To a large extent, the cultural practices and norms of the majority of migrants are not distinct from the host. Even, those that are different, conformed to the practices of the host. This, according to the respondents, was to make them acceptable in the community. There are, however, a few who were reluctant to observe the norms and this led to few skirmishes, but it mostly did not lead to conflict. Similarly, there have been some traits from migrants, which have been copied by the host. Youth and children are seen as accommodating and easily adopted the "galamsey culture", which is typically the sore point in the relationship between the two. Generally, integration is the best option that both groups preferred; that is, migrants conformed to some of the host's norms and practices, while at the same time keeping some of their own practices, especially those that are disruptive of the established social order.

The analysis presents new insights to the conflict curve. Juxtaposing the conflict curve (see Lund, 1996 and USAID, 2012) with evidence found corroborates Marx's theory of conflict. This shows that most conflict situations, as observed from ASM communities in the district, begin subtly, often as murmurings, agitations and raised voices, before escalating to a peak point. During the peak point, conflict is mostly manifested in acts of violence and often results in injuries. This does not necessarily rip communities apart, but is followed by a period of de-escalation, where efforts are put in place to build peace. However, the theory of the conflict curve needs to be revisited as it seems to suggest that the period of post-conflict peace building is everlasting. Notwithstanding the de-escalation of the general conflict situation within the ASM communities in the Birim North District, evidence reveals several pockets of violence; and respondents are emphatic that they would not rule out a surge in conflict in the future. They report that conflict corresponds to periods of boom and depression,

surging during periods of boom, particularly with the discovery of a rich layer, and receding in periods of depression. Consequently, as Coser (1956) argues, it would be utopian to suggest that a group or society could be devoid entirely of conflict. Even in periods of peace, actors may occasionally have incompatible goals which will be manifested in conflict behaviour. As such, the curve will be relevant if it is characterised by fluctuating periods of boom and depression, depicted on a graph as an inverted S.

Furthermore, the theories advanced a series of proposition which are not entirely consistent with evidence found in the study area. Firstly, it suggests that intergroup conflict is initiated when an in-group perceives that a salient out-group is not only a threat but is in competition with them for resources. Secondly, to eliminate the source of competition, the in-group should use antagonistic behaviour, increase their competitiveness or distance themselves from the out-group. However, as previously stated evidence reveals that conflict between host and migrant occurs despite the fact that some members of the migrant group are not significantly distinct from the host. Indeed, the majority of the migrants (45.2%) are from the same region as the host, which is dominated by Akans who share similar socio-cultural practices and traits. Secondly, the indigenous group, aside from using conflict behaviour and increasing their competitiveness by learning the intricacies of galamsey from migrants, have not separated themselves from the out-group. Rather, they have found amicable resolutions to conflict situations. The pattern demonstrated in the study is, however, consistent with the pursuit of superordinate goals advanced by Sherif et al. (1961). While these do not change the attitude of the host to migrant miners, they reduce friction, as both groups accept and cooperate with each other in the exploitation of gold and in the search for rich gold layers. It is obvious that when more rich gold layers are found, intense competition is reduced and everyone can work free from fear and tension. Thirdly, the theory assumes the irrationality of the individual, which means placing group interest above individual preferences. However, it was noted during the study that migrant gangs, though close-knit, allow some members of the indigenous communities to join them. This provides a way for members of the host communities to acquire experience and skill. Also, not only are migrants allowed into the communities, but individual community members provide them with accommodation. Therefore, consistent with the proposition of Taylor and Moghaddam (1987), individual members will act rationally and in their self-interest to maximise their own rewards, neglecting agitations towards the other group. Similarly, some gang members have left the group, ostensibly displeased with dealings in the group, and have worked alone or formed alliances with other groups.

8.3 Policy Implications

ASM has not been given its due recognition in Ghana despite its significant contribution to employment, rural-urban migration, and gold production. Whenever ASM has been considered, it is about its negative effects and according to Buxton (2013) as a response to sustainable development in mining. On the international front, there has been considerable improvement in policy initiatives

towards ASM, however, Ghana is yet to come to the realisation that ASM needs to be recognised in its own right. The current debate on ASM in the country is being spearheaded by those who oppose the activity, including environmentalists, politicians and a section of the media. They have been able to trump the voice of those who argue that ASM should be discussed within sustainable development initiatives. However, Ghana's attempts at formalising ASM give cause for optimism, especially as respondents gave the indication that they were prepared to regularise their operations if the bureaucratic and financial impediments are realigned.

Though the government has been criticised that its efforts at regularising ASM was only to deepen state participation in the mining sector, there is unanimity that regularisation has wider significance not only for the state and the ASM sector but the whole mining industry and sustainable development. From the state's position, aside the mark-up in revenue generation, regularisation of ASM enables the government to know the number of people engaged in the activity. This aids the government to realign its policies and programmes[98] to reflect the changing landscape of ASM in the country. Presently, the paucity of data on the exact number of artisanal miners in the country has not only hindered research, but has made it virtually impossible for the government to plan as well as formulate policies and programmes for the sector. Migration has been considered as a critical unknown in population estimates and with mining communities persistently inundated with migrants, knowing the current population of artisanal miners helps government to make projections on revenue targets. Similarly, it assists district assemblies to anticipate which specific development intervention that communities under their jurisdiction will need currently and in the future. Importantly, regularising the ASM sector also gives an indication to the government of the total land area used for artisanal mining and their location. Though, most mining communities in the country are remotely located and often far from direct government intervention, knowing which localities are undertaking galamsey could help the government contain or control the activity in particular zones or relocate to other jurisdictions if they have encroached on forest reserves or a mining company's concession.

Regularising galamsey also has important implications for the communities involved. A key stakeholder that has not been consulted in the drive to regularise galamsey has been the communities. Nyame and Blocher (2009: 51) were critical of the government that "there were virtually no consultations or involvement whatsoever of other interested parties and landowners; nor did such decisions take into consideration traditional land tenure practices". Thus, mining communities have virtually been left on their own to deal with the impact of the influx of migrants and galamsey. There are, indeed, some communities that the government has no knowledge that galamsey is taking place there. As such, traditional leaders in many of these localities have become dictatorial and exploit the artisanal miners as they remain the only form of authority. Without much knowledge about the social

[98] The Policies and programmes could include training, health and safety checks and financial assistance.

and environmental hazards of galamsey, these chiefs have authorised galamsey operations on any land deemed to contain gold deposit due to the financial consideration. The consequences have been the pollution of river bodies, the desolation of lands, and human and food security challenges for the communities and government. However, in a regularised and educated[99] environment, the communities are not only accountable to the state but to themselves. Aside knowing the number of artisanal miners in the communities, they are also able to regulate areas where galamsey can be undertaken. Mining communities in the Birim North District have on their own initiative pursued efforts at regulating galamsey. They have banned galamsey activities in the residential sections of the communities and set up committees in charge of regulating and administering the activity. The committees have kept galamsey in check, reduced conflicts and other negative impacts as well as secured much needed funds for community development. Albeit illegal, the suggestion is that in an officially sanctioned and regulated environment, the benefits will be immeasurable to the mining communities.

The above point ties in with agreements between communities and large-scale mining companies to release part of their concession for artisanal mining. Due to the parallel nature of land systems in the country, large-scale mining companies and the state on one hand and communities and artisanal miners on the other hand have frequently clashed. However, in a regulated environment prompted by a situation where the state recognises customary claims to land, conflicts between the stakeholders, especially large- and small-scale miners, will be reduced to the minimum and even co-exist. For instance, the communities, Noyem and Nyafoman, have been able to negotiate with Newmont to release sections of its unused concessions for small-scale mining activities. Such a situation could not have materialised had the communities not shown a common front and instituted regulatory measures for galamsey. Therefore, a vital implication when artisanal mining is regularised is a reduction in the level of antagonism among the stakeholders in the mining sector.

This has an add-on effect as conflict among artisanal miners will be at the bare minimum. In this thesis, conflicts and its aftereffects have been thoroughly explored and there is no doubt that it has been one of the major banes of galamsey in the country. In a regularised environment, where both the state and chiefs, represented by the committees, exercise their authority, the incidence of conflicts will decrease. Contrasted to a chaotic environment, a regularised system means that the miners have officially demarcated plots and there is strict supervision. In such a working environment, though conflicts will not be eliminated in its entirety, there is every chance that it will be a pale-shadow compared to what exists in an unregulated mining site.

[99] Educated refers to conditions in which the communities have been consulted, made to feel included in the decisions of galamsey and information and capacity of the communities are built to understand the pros and cons of galamsey.

The role of NGOs in ASM cannot be overemphasised, however, not one NGO was found to be operating in the study area. In a study by Haselip (2006), a representative of an NGO commenting on mining issues asked to remain anonymous, potentially fearing a backlash from whichever stakeholder he criticises. However, NGOs are an essential development tool and in mining become the voice of the local communities through establishing channels of dialogue and communication between the large-scale miners and local communities. As found in the study area, the NGOs have been visibly absent from ASM issues for fear of being labelled as condoning and perpetuating an illegality. But in a regulated environment, NGOs will, aside from becoming advocates for the artisanal miners and the local communities, investigate cases of conflicts and provide effective solutions to the negative issues related to ASM.

Child labour has been an issue that has bedevilled all sectors in the Ghanaian economy, especially the cocoa and mining sectors. Children working in mining is "considered hazardous because it exposes them to physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse, involves work underground and in confined spaces, includes the use of dangerous equipment and manual handling or transport of heavy loads, the use of hazardous substances and work for very long hours" (ILO, 2013: 1). However, in most mining sites, children have been found to carry out various activities due to its lucrativeness. In Ghana, the ILO (2013) found the conditions under which these children were working as very disturbing and called for additional policies and programmes to eliminate child labour in galamsey. Several measures have been recommended to eliminate child labour, but the problem persists. However, regularising galamsey operations with the active support of all the stakeholders, especially the local communities will be a step in the right direction. Mining communities in the Birim North District have virtually been able to eliminate any forms of child labour as the activity is to some extent regularised by the local people. Informal discussions held with members of the galamsey committees indicate that any child found working in any of the mining site is expelled and their parents are surcharged. So far, their directives have been able to prevent children from venturing mining sites. Therefore, the elimination of child labour will have a far wider likelihood of success in the country if galamsey is regularised with an effective stakeholder collaboration.

However, it is ironic that the main beneficiaries of regularisation, artisanal miners, have so far failed to appreciate and take advantage of the process. Not only has the financial and tedious nature of securing a license proven to be an impediment, but they have been crowded out of available mineralised lands by large-scale mining companies. While it is true that the majority of these artisanal miners do not have the funds to secure title to land or even to acquire the relevant authorisation, the implications of having a license are far reaching. Firstly, it provides security for the operator. Though, Master Ayuba[100] had spent a considerable amount of money on his site, he had no security. At the

[100] See in-depth interview in chapter six.

time of fieldwork, he feared losing out on his investments and was prepared to contest anyone who put in a claim for his site. Among the majority who do not have control over the pits that they work in, He is one of the few miners who are fortunate to secure their own site for galamsey. However, he could have safeguarded his investments and saved himself the anxiety, if he had secured a license. Having a license gives the holder some amount of security, which intend implies peace of mind and a secure income.

Having security has further implications as the artisanal miner has the capacity to secure the needed capital to buy the tools of the trade and even expand his operation. Presently, there is virtually no financial institution that will give a loan to an artisanal miner because aside lacking material collateral, they do not also have a license to prove their tenure. Aside from the fact that access to finance to secure land title has been a challenge, they have been further constrained to use rudimentary and backbreaking equipment. The lack of funds has meant that most artisanal miners do not believe there is sustainability in galamsey and will rather save enough to venture into other businesses. Those who have been able to secure funding, have only resorted to sponsors and "loan-sharks". Often, they have ended up in serious debts as the interest charged have been exorbitant. However, in a regulated environment where they can mobilise themselves into groups and cooperatives, they can broaden their capacity to access capital to finance their operation.

Furthermore, a major challenge to galamsey has been their inability to mobilise themselves into a group. Master Ayuba and many of the respondents claimed that their attempt to form a group has been futile. They had failed in their attempt to form a galamsey association, because galamsey was migratory and many of them did not have permanent sites; they tend to leave at short notice upon hearing of a potential gold strike in another locality. Also, though they had made petitions to the then District Chief Executive, who later became the Deputy Eastern Regional Minister, to help them form an association, because per the government's position galamsey was illegal, their petitions were unanswered. Thus, unable to form an association, they were unable to elect leaders who will represent their cause as well as organize the artisanal miners. While the government has been blamed as the cause, if they had taken the opportunity to formalise their operations, it will have been much easier to form an association and have a critical voice in mining issues.

Despite the challenges of the sector, galamsey miners form a critical mass that represents an opportunity that can be harnessed for sustainable development. However, to effectively and efficiently achieved this, policy makers have to liaise with researchers to find the best alternative to help bring artisanal miners into a homogenised mining sector. Currently, there is a wide gap between policy and research. While research has proven that galamsey is a poverty driven activity, policy makers and sections of the media hold that it is on the ascendancy due to the "get rich mentality" of most youth in the country. Similarly, there is a gap between policy makers and researchers on the issue of

formalising galamsey. Researchers have accused the state of implementing adhoc policies without giving due recognition to those who the polices are made for. It is impossible to gainsay that these are hot-blooded young men do not have the patience and financial resources to go through regularisation as prescribed by the law. However, ignoring them will be at our peril. Regularisation will stand no chance of success if artisanal miners are not convinced of its benefits. To address the challenges of regularisation and other critical issues of galamsey, the following should be prioritised by the government.

Firstly, the divisive small-scale mining law should be amended or realigned to reflect the current nature of ASM in the country. As per the law, the majority of artisanal miners will not be capable of acquiring a license as they do not have the capacity to secure a land before the license can be granted. Indeed, no provision is made in the law for artisanal mining as well as an option to enable them acquire a license without first securing a land. An amended law should make it possible for communities to acquire a mining license and then give smaller portions out to artisanal miners. Since not all of them can acquire plots of land, the law should recognise the rights of pit-holders and provide them with the requisite license. Moreover, the law should decriminalise galamsey as well as accept that they have rights which cannot be ignored. Recognising galamsey gives ASM operators' security and by extension, the ability to access funding.

Secondly, and most importantly, the policy makers should encourage the formation of associations. Echavarria (2014) notes that as representative bodies, the formation of galamsey associations should be a priority of the state. This is due to the fact that they "play a key role in promoting formalisation as well as important early warning mechanisms of problems or barriers in different regions" (Ibid: 117). There is no doubt that when artisanal miners have an association, they are more likely to listen to their leaders than state officials. Thus, the association serves as an effective tool in disseminating information on formalising their operations, educating members about the dangers of mercury and other unsafe practices and organising a controlled pattern of galamsey.

Furthermore, the state should provide technical and financial help to artisanal miners. Currently, the Minerals Commission is the only body mandated to ensure compliance and regulate the small-scale mining sector. However, it has failed in its mandate to support, promote and mentor small-scale miners in the country. For instance, in the Birim North District the plan of the Commission to set up an office has not materialised. This has meant that the critical technical and financial support has eluded artisanal miners in the District. The Minerals Commission should, therefore, strengthen its support for the miners, including assisting them in the process of acquiring a license and create an enabling and friendly environment that makes them easily accessible to the miners. Moreover, they should also partner various small-scale mining associations to access credit for its members.

8.4 Agenda for Further Research

Despite the attempt to comprehensively cover issues related to migration and conflicts within ASM, the scale of the debate is broad and multifaceted and there are matters and challenges that, though they warrant further examination, are beyond the scope of this study. I have examined the relationship between host and migrant, and the ways in which conflict arises and peace is brokered, concentrating on only a few ASM communities in the Birim North District and limited to underground mining. Because the research is limited to a geographical area, any attempt at replicating the findings in another region would be ill-advised.

Moreover, the methodology adopted was tailored specifically to the study, especially considering the subject of young galamsey miners and the environment within which it was carried out. While I adopted purposive and snowballing methods in the selection of appropriate study areas and respondents, the choice of a stricter, non-random and scientific method would deepen understanding of the relationship between the host and migrants in the ASM sector.

Further issues for consideration include the following:

- While the study discusses the role of the committee, it is effective only to the extent of its influence in conflict resolution and ensuring harmony at the mining sites. Thus, a consideration for future research would be an in-depth investigation into the committee, focusing on its formation, structure, and pros and cons. Despite having been in existence for quite a while, the committee has not been subjected to any critical study and it is important that its particulars are extensively investigated. Moreover, a study could reconcile the role played by the various actors in conflict resolution and identify the gaps that exist. This is critical if future conflicts are to be brought to the barest minimum.
- It has been said in various circles, including in academia, that the state is absent in galamsey due to its weakness or its lack of capacity, though it could, at short notice, organise anti-galamsey task force raids on sites across the country. However, the state is seen as absent because state officials have overlooked galamsey from lack of political will. While attempts at formalisation have failed woefully, it is important that the role of the state be reconsidered in the light of the institutionalisation of mining committees in the district, which has brought some sanity to galamsey. The state should either review its stance and make its presence felt, or repose its authority in the committee. Whichever approach it adopts, a critical study is needed to reassess the role of the state in galamsey.
- Despite the need for a comparative analysis of how conflict occurs between underground and surface mining, this study concentrates on underground mining. Thus, extensive analysis is required to discover how host-migrant interrelationships lead to conflict among those engaged in different mining methods.

- Though the study generally did not find any third-party agents in the Birim North District, it is important that further studies are undertaken to ascertain the role that the non-governmental agents play in galamsey in other areas. Over the years, most NGOs have paid lip service to galamsey, and have increasingly directed their efforts toward solving issues and skirmishes between communities and artisanal miners on one hand, and large mining companies on the other. Such a study will provide a critical assessment and understanding of the role that, for instance, the District Assembly and NGOs are expected to play, and have in reality played, within the ASM sector.

As with all other issues relating to galamsey, the government has adopted *ad-hoc* measures in a bid to curb its menace. However, there is a need for extensive research, not only on the subjects listed above, but on wider issues within galamsey, to direct government policies and strategies. From the viewpoint of young people, the country's increasingly deplorable economic outlook and the notable silence of government about their plight will only worsen the already unfavourable associations with galamsey. However, this could be mitigated with appropriate policies and strategies generated from research, both at the local and national level.

8.5 Concluding Remarks

This study has explored multifaceted issues in ASM, including the relationship between the host and migrants, the nature and manifestation of conflicts, and how peace is brokered among the various actors. The host-migrant relationship in the study area has oscillated between peace and hostility, depending on how the host perceived migrants at any point in time. Migrants have often had to negotiate their relationship with the host. When galamsey began in the Birim North District, they were able to steer the relationship in their favour due to their practical and technological know-how, resulting in relative peace. However, hostility arose when, after the host had acquired the necessary experience to undertake galamsey, the power balance shifted to them in the long term. Despite the pervasiveness of conflict and other negative effects, galamsey continues to offer a viable livelihood opportunity for both migrants and indigenes, and it has contributed in diverse ways to the local economy in the study area. As things stand, the District Assembly and other state authorities have failed to aid artisanal miners, since they have deemed their activity illegal. However, the leaders of the communities have not looked on unconcerned, and in conjunction with artisanal miners, they have adopted several measures to mitigate the persistent conflict that has surrounded the activity.

This study contributes to the emerging literature on the relationship among stakeholders in the mining industry and to the subjects of conflict, ASM and migration in general. By focusing on a theme which has been overlooked by research, and by using the experiences of youth migrants in galamsey, the study has examined current trends of migration and theories of conflict and host-migrant relationships. Through this, it has not only reinforced some conclusions reached by these theories, but

has also raised several questions that could deepen their application and help shape policy direction on issues relevant to ASM. Also, this thesis can serve as a preliminary conflict assessment guide, to facilitate and support an in-depth conflict analysis as well as an integrated process of conflict management in ASM communities in the district. To the extent that this study has provided useful insights into the experiences and perception of youth migrants and the outcomes of host-migrant relationships within galamsey, which would have otherwise not been achieved, the objectives that inspired it have been attained.

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Appendix

Appendix 1

A Historical Overview of Gold Mining Related Conflicts in Ghana

"It is said that …….in the country of Ghana, gold grows in the sand as carrots do and is plucked at sunrise," wrote Ibn al-Faqih, an Iranian Scholar in c. 900 (Reader, 1997)

Introduction

Post-colonial Ghana is perhaps one of the few countries in the West Africa sub region, which can be classified as peaceful and devoid of the turmoil that has dissipated its neighbours like Liberia and Cote D'Ivoire. However, the country has and is not totally free of conflict as there have been several internecine conflicts, but these have largely been contained and have not assumed the dimensions of those of its neighbours. Past and present conflicts have been fought for myriad reasons, chiefly among them being tribal conflicts and chieftaincy disputes. However, only few scholars such as Junner (1973), Dumett (1987), Boahen (1975), Nyame et al. (2009) and Ofosu-Mensah (2010; 2011) have attempted to link gold to conflict in the country and is considered by Ofosu-Mensah (2011: 9) as "a hornet's nest in inter-ethnic relations in Ghana since pre-colonial times to the present". In this section of the thesis, I argue that the quest for and control of gold has been instrumental in conflicts, historical and contemporary, in the country. To do this an attempt is made to chronicle the history of gold mining in Ghana, however, the primary concern is devoted to an interrogation of how gold, *Sika*, contributed to a large extent conflict in the country. Furthermore, the section will examine periods during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence eras. Though historical accounts and contemporary research on gold and gold mining conflicts in Ghana suggest a more nuanced narrative, the distinction of these eras is essential as each clearly highlights diverse but often related reasons that depict how gold and its quest, control and trade led to conflicts, especially the southern sector of the country. This section contributes to the scholarship on gold mining related conflicts by linking pre-colonial and colonial studies to contemporary periods in one narrative.

Context

It is imperative to note that conflict emanating from mining activities in the past and present-day Ghana has been centred in areas of Southern Ghana, where a significant percentage of the gold deposit can be found. This is affirmed by Clark (1994) who asserts that a substantial proportion of the gold produced in Ghana came from the Ashanti, Eastern, Western and Central regions. Indeed, Ghana's gold belt stretches the expanse of nearly all Akan states from the Akwapim-Akyem fringes of the Eastern Region to the border of Cote D'Ivoire and close to areas around the Black Volta. The most endowed auriferous lands are found in Denkyira, Wassa, Adanse, Konongo, Assin, Aowin, the Kwahu areas and Akyem territories and these are linguistically and culturally Akan. Furthermore, it is critical to state that it was the control over these auriferous areas and mineral resources that generated

conflicts among the people of Southern Ghana. Archaeological evidence and oral traditions reveal that the Akans migrated to southern Ghana from the north, possibly descendants of the ancient Ghana Empire in present day Mali. Though they settled on a vast expanse of land in small settlements, the first known state was Bono Manso, followed in later years by Akwamu and several other prominent kingdoms including the Ashanti. It is worth mentioning that these states and kingdoms have risen and fallen after the rise of one and the fall of another and all related to the quest and control of economic resources as I argue that gold was the core resource. The historical account of gold relates conflicts in Ghana can be conveniently apportioned into three periods: namely the precolonial, colonial and post-colonial/independence eras.

Gold Related Conflicts in the Pre-colonial Era

One of the fundamental factors which has moulded the history and continues to play a critical part in the current economic dispensation in the country is seen in its past name, the Gold Coast. Gold has and continues to play a prominent role in the socioeconomic and political life of Gold Coasters (Cartland, 1947). Since time immemorial, gold has been regarded as the most treasured commodity because of its use as a currency and the wealth, status and power wielded by those who amassed it (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011:7). For centuries, a major proportion of the world's gold production has emanated from Ghana, both past (ancient Ghana Empire) and present day. Ghana's fame as the land of gold emerged towards the latter part of the millennium where materials and weapons decorated in gold was a commonplace (Hilson, 2002).

Until the trans-Saharan gold trade, gold had no significant value for the general populace and was gathered seasonally or as a part time occupation in the lean farming seasons (Reader, 1997). However, gold exploitation intensified and attained a full-time occupation in response to growing foreign demand.) Gold became a highly-prized metal due to interest from foreign traders and thereafter "the metal came to represent the culture's important role in the trade of the precious metal, and so became associated with wealth, power, and status" (McCarthy, 2011: 3). Though the Portuguese reported that the indigenous people were primitive when they first came into contact with the people of the Gold Coast, they also indicated that the "chiefs were covered in plates of gold and wore gold chains" (Agbesinyale, 2003: 106). However, the indigenes had little regard for gold as they readily exchanged it "for goods like brass, lead, pewter basins, red shells, copper bangles, pots of coarse tin, simple weapons, tolls and cloths" (Reisenberger, 2010: 17).

Despite the suggestion by Kevane (2014) that oral accounts of the part that gold played in the history of the country were woven out of sparse facts, there is every reason to be that kingdoms and state in Ghana flourished due to gold, which shaped their economic and political dynamics. Indeed, it is upon "gold that the economy of the modern Gold Coast received its first impetus" (Cartland, 1947: 90). Undeniably, gold was the cornerstone in the formation of budding Akan states. Bono Manso is

reputed to be the first Akan state to be considered as a powerful kingdom and it gained the recognition through its gold trade with kingdoms in North Africa, namely the Mande and Mossi (Arhin, 1978). However, the paradox associated with gold is that its discovery and quest led on the one hand to the rise of well-structured and formidable states and on the other hand the rise in conflicts and provocations by individuals and groups against the structures of the state (Kavane, 2014).

In pre-colonial times, though the sources of conflicts were numerous and diverse in nature, the traditional Ghanaian society was plagued with mining as one of the chief causes of conflicts. During these periods, the ability of kingdoms to expand into empires was in part driven by the control over gold rich lands. Even before the Europeans arrived in Gold Coast, the majority of the wars fought in the southern part of Ghana was not only initiated at the behest to "just extend their influence and territorial boundaries, but even more importantly, conquer auriferous lands" (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011: 9). Quite clearly the areas rich in gold deposits were a constant source of invasion by more powerful states. Such that though many of the ethnic states that existed during the pre-colonial era used gold in part as a medium of exchange, they critically, used it as "an embodiment of the power and influence [over] various tribal groups or states" (Nyame et al., 2009: 7).

Examples of such conquest are found in the scholarly works of Laffoley and Laidler (1997) and Arhin (1978) in which they indicate that the Bono Manso kingdom was conquered by the Akwamus, who were credited with introducing a semi-military style of governance which was instrumental in the success of Akan states and most especially the Ashanti kingdom. The fall of the Akwamu state was followed by the rise of the Denkyira state. The territorial might of the Denkyira state in the 18th century was due to its control of gold mines and supply routes from the Bono-Takyiman area. While the Denkyira state was able to expand with the annexation of several smaller states, it became a powerful empire because of the wealth it was able to amass from its gold mines and those of the other states it conquered through the tributes and taxes that it established (Ofosu-Mensah, 2010). At the height of its might, the Denkyira state controlled the vast areas which were richly endowed with gold deposits, including Ashanti, Wassa, and Adanse and these tributary states paid their tributes in the form of gold.

The Ashantis defeated the Denkyiras after a long period of subjugation, urged on not only to gain their independence, but more importantly, to have access and control over the trading with European merchants. The arrival of European merchants in Ghana revolutionised and diverted trading to the coast, which was hitherto to the Northern parts of Africa. The control of these trade routes brought immense wealth and power to these states that there were constant rivalries between them and the target of such feud was gold (Buah, 1980). The supremacy of the Ashanti kingdom was similarly predicated upon gold. Indeed, the fame of the Ashanti kingdom cannot be written without reference to its attachment to gold and it is believed that the start of the Ashanti Confederacy was initiated from

resources obtained by “washing the top layers of soil from markets for its gold content” (Laffoley and Laidler, 1997: 13). The Ashantis after gaining their independence exercised suzerain powers over Denkyira and Adanse and waged military campaigns into the Bono Kingdom and Wassa states to gain autonomy over their huge gold resources. After the Ashantis had successfully defeated the Wassa state in 1785, they looted its royal treasuries and also compelled the latter to periodically pay tributes in gold to the Ashanti King (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011). Despite the lack of heavy machinery, the Ashantis were able to produce huge quantities of gold, evidence shows that the Ashantis were able to accumulate and trade in large quantities of gold because they were able to conquer and annex all the known auriferous lands that paid tributes to the Ashanti king in gold (Ayensu, 1987). Also, oral tradition suggests that Denkyira slave labour and mining techniques were used extensively for Ashanti gold undertaken (Laffoley and Laidler, 1997). According to Wilks (1982) and Ofosu-Mensah (2011) the appropriation of the gold treasurers and feudal rents obligated of conquered states to the Ashanti king greatly enhanced the financial position of the Ashanti Kingdom. To a large extent, due to the fact that the Ashantis virtually controlled gold production and also demanded a fifty percent tax from indigenous miners assured them dominance politically and supported their military power in the entire region. What's more, while gold formed a greater component of the paraphernalia and symbolised one’s influence on the socio-political hierarchy, for instance the Ashantihene (Ashanti king) was characterised “as the one who sat on gold”, it also provided an important means for acquiring guns and ammunitions from the Europeans.

Like the Denkyiras, the reign of the Ashanti kingdom did not last as they were defeated in the Battle of Katamanso in 1826 by the British. Before the Ashantis were defeated, several records affirmed that they were receiving tributes from the Assins, the Denkyiras and the Akwamus and taxes from forts and castles along the coast of Ghana (Ghana News Agency, 2002). Similarly, events after the war by the British in an account rendered by Reindorf in Ofosu-Mensah (2011: 11) depicts the supremacy of gold as an object of war, stating that the Ashanti king did not only lose people of his household, but “all his royal badges, states umbrellas, gold-hilted swords, jewels and military chest containing thousands of gold cartouches filled with gold dust instead of gunpowder….”. The British organised two further military campaigns against the Ashantis in 1874 and 1876 seizing several gold arts and crafts as well as forcing them to pay tributes. In parallel with conflicts between the states and with the Europeans, the Europeans were also engaged in conflicts among themselves. The Portuguese, Danes, Dutch and the British were in constant battle with each other ostensibly to dominate trade with the local people and gold was the fundamental resource that instigated and exacerbated these conflicts.

I had earlier recounted how the coming of the Europeans changed the course of trade from the trans-Saharan, which was northbound, to Atlantic trade, which was southbound and the commonplace knowledge was that gold was the principal commodity of trade until the rise and decline of slave trading (Ofosu-Mensah, 2010). However, because the Europeans were not successful at gold mining

as they did not have adequate manpower and also succumbed to tropical diseases, they thus relied on indigenous miners for the supply of gold (Reisenberger, 2010). Boahen (1975) depicts two key conduits that the Atlantic trade perpetuated conflicts among the people of Southern Ghana. Firstly, though the Ashantis had control over the production of gold due to its large jurisdiction over auriferous lands, it had to resort to middlemen, the people of the coast, such as the Gas, Fantes and Ahantas, to trade with the Europeans. However, the middlemen often cheated the inland traders and also made trading cumbersome for them. To eliminate the bottlenecks associated with these middlemen, especially in acquiring imported foreign goods, the Ashantis frequently waged attacks on these coastal states. Secondly, because the Ashantis were the principal producers of gold, a sought-after commodity of the Europeans, who exchanged it for guns and ammunitions, the Ashantis were able to amass large quantities of it. This greatly enhanced their chances against their neighbours and were able to use their newly acquired might to conquer several of these coastal states, so that they gain direct control of trade routes with the Europeans. Documentary sources reveal that the Ashanti's conquest of coastal states began with the war and subsequent conquer of Nzima and Aowin in 1712, and then Akyem and Ga in 1742 and later Fante in 1765. Boahen (1966) affirms that to a considerable extent the Ashantis by 1750, except for Fante lands, had annexed all the states of modern Ghana.

These gold related conflicts were not limited to the well-established states, but was witnessed among the smaller and less known settlements, particularly instigated by corrupt traditional authorities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that local chiefs and their apparatchiks under the pretext of taxation, extorted their subjects, often seizing their gold in contravention of the tribute and one-third 'abusua' shared system, which aggravated hostilities and led to the frequent migrations that pertained during this period.

So far there is the unquestionable acceptance that gold over the past centuries has been "a symbol of power and wealth ….and motivations for state formation…." (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011: 12). Indeed, to aspire to and gain prominence in the society, the accumulation of gold played a fundamental role and men went to all lengths to acquire it.

Gold Related Conflicts during the Colonial Era

As noted previously, under colonial rule Ghana was known as the Gold Coast to the Europeans due to its rich gold deposits, which according to Nyame et al. (2009) prompted the colonial government to actively pursue gold mining to resource the British Empire. Cartalnd (1947: 90) claims that though there were varying quantities of other minerals such as diamonds, bauxite etc., it was based on "gold that the economy of the modern Gold Coast received its first impetus". It was during the colonial period that the Ashanti kingdom was forcefully annexed by the British in 1896 and this marked a turning point which paved way for European mining companies into the forest regions of the country. The allure of gold was the fundamental reason that endeared the British to control the Ashanti

kingdom and the entire Gold Coast in the 19th century (Jackson, 1992). So much so that the quest for gold from the colonies, especially Ghana, was so intense that the King of Spain, Ferdinand, in 1511 entreated his conquistadors to "get gold humanely possible, but at all costs, get gold" (Ayensu, 1997; Owusu Koranteng, 2005).

However, though the country was under the dominion of the British, the spate of conflict amongst the various states over gold resources continued. In the precolonial period, just before the abolition of the slave trade, land, which was owned communally and entrusted with the custody of the chiefs, was used principally for the cultivation of crops and other community-related related needs. However, colonial rule and the abolition of the slave trade substituted human trade for trade in natural resources, such that it led not to only replacing communal ownership of land to individuals and private entities, but also increased "conflicts between individuals and communities for the control over land and resources therein" (Mbah, 2013: 75). Due to the economic significance attached to the land, it became in relative terms scarce and valuable. Several authors, including Boahen (1975), Addo-Fening (1975) and Affrifa (2000) attest to the internecine war between, especially, the people of Akyem-Abuakwa and Akwamu over the control of auriferous and diamondiferous laden lands. Similarly, at the same period the various states within the Akyem-Abuakwa traditional area were antagonistic against each other ostensibly over the payment of royalties to the Okyehene. Addo-Fening (1975), perhaps the most illustrious historian of the account of the Akyems, suggests that the origin of the dispute was a dispute that arose "between the Okyehene and two other chiefs over matters of title and interest in Asamankese and Akwatia lands" which were much endowed with mineral resources. To obtain a substantial share of any land given out as a concession, the Okyehene enacted a bylaw which stipulated that any land sale under his territories should receive his consent as well as reserved all timber and mining rights to the stool.

Interestingly, in the period just before independence, disgruntled members in the struggle for independence (the NLM) from the Ashanti Region deeply concerned about the dwindling influence in the management of the country's resources vehemently opposed Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's (who eventually became the country's first president) centralised policies because they wanted a governance system that would assure them of control over their resources (principally gold). The subsequent secession threats finally reached its climax when Dr. Nkrumah and his party members were barred from Kumasi, the capital of Ashanti Region and those in Kumasi had had to flee to Accra. The suggestion among historians revealed that the malcontent against Dr. Nkrumah were worries rooted in the control and ownership of gold resources which the Ashanti territories were endowed. Another school of thought believed that the protagonists were of the view that per the territories majority contribution to the national purse, they were entitled to constitute a dominant category of the nation's governance system or allowed greater autonomy over their mineral resources. However, the NLM angered that their demands were not given their due consideration embarked on a

series of plans to secede from the country, popularising the slogan “M’ate me ho”, meaning I have separated (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011: 14). Though the CPP government of Dr. Nkrumah successfully repelled attempts at secession, it came at the loss of several lives. The violence culminated in members of the government, supporters and allies bared from Kumasi, the capital of the Ashanti territories.

During colonial rule, the British enacted the Concession Ordinance (1900) which excluded indigenous people from gold mining, which had hitherto been somewhat their occupation, while at the same time the ordinance proffered large tract of mineralised lands to expatriate mining companies. This potentially prevented the indigenous people the use of the land which served as the main source of livelihood, thus rendering them incapable of meeting their subsistence. Interestingly, the organisation of mining activities after independence did not alter significantly compared to what had pertained during the colonial period. The state continued to favour expatriate large mining companies at the expense of the indigenous people. Ofosu-Mensah (2011) laments that the drive of the newly independent country was geared toward securing more foreign exchange, which led to the indiscriminate granting of concession rights to the large-scale mining companies on lands that were already occupied by indigenous artisanal miners. The eviction of the latter aggrieved them, who encroached on the concessions, generating skirmishes between the artisanal miners and the mining companies. Notwithstanding the direction that present-day gold mining related conflicts have evolved, many of these conflicts have been violent and even involved government officials and security forces (Urmilla, 2010). Furthermore, the introduction of modern scientific methods of mining and legislation has done very little to reduce sporadic eruptions of conflicts in the country.

Gold Related Conflicts in Post-colonial Ghana

During the periods before independence, conflicts specific to gold were mainly the conquest by one kingdom in the apparent attempt at obtaining ultimate control over auriferous lands and the subjugation of traditional authorities over their subjects. However, in post-colonial Ghana, despite the fact that gold continues to play its dominant role in the socioeconomic and political life of the people, the reality of independence and states fading into a nation state changed the dynamics of conflicts instigated by the quest and control over gold resources.

After independence, an issue that has frequently been cited in conflict within the mining sector is the contentious problem between galamsey operators, large-scale mining companies, host communities, government and security forces. Contributing extensively to the literature, Ofosu-Mensah (2011) takes the view that the major factor that has contributed to conflict in the industry is how the stakeholders interacted among and distinguishes three (3) types of gold mining related conflicts that have plagued the country since independence, namely:

- Artisanal/Small-scale Miners (Galamsey) vs. Large-scale Mining Companies,

- Artisanal/Small-scale Miners vs. State and Private Security Agencies, and lastly
- Host Mining Communities vs. Small-scale and Large-scale Mining entities.

Conflicts between Galamsey Operators and Large Scale Mining Companies

In contemporary periods, conflicts within the gold mining sector has been observed in the number of frequent clashes between galamsey operators and large scale mining companies. The conflicts and tensions between the two stakeholders have often erupted as large scale mining companies have labelled artisanal miners as criminals, accusing them of encroachment on their concessions. The artisanal miners have been emboldened to undertake such actions as they indict the large-scale mining companies of colluding with government to edge them off their land and denying them their right not only to a viable livelihood, but also access to large tracts of mineral-rich lands tied up and yet to be exploited by these companies. The standoff between the two has been unravelled with the use of security forces often leading to extreme injuries and death. Despite its potential to scare off would-be investors, the artisanal miners contend that they have been cheated out of their customary owned lands due to their marginalised position and limited power against the state. Several clashes have been witnessed in the Ashanti, Western and recently in the Eastern regions and aside affecting the operations of the mining companies, it has serious repercussions, severely straining the relationship between the two as well as negatively impacting indigenous communities and the mining industry at large.

The root cause that has led to a protraction of these conflicts is the variance between the constitution and the mining policy. While the constitution of the country stipulates that an individual or entity has the right to own a property, either alone or in partnership with others, the Minerals and Mining Act 703, after a repeal of the PNDC Law 153 and 218, reserves all mineralised land under the authority of the state (Taabazuing et al, 2012). Conflicts emanate when on one hand, artisanal miners who obtain permission from the landowner or in most cases the traditional ruler (chief) clash with the large-scale mining companies, which on the other hand secure the right to the land from the state. In recent times this contentious issue has been in the ascendency, despite government efforts at providing incentive packages including formalising activities of small-scale mining and credit schemes in a bid to smoothen the relationship between stakeholders in the mining sector (Hilson and Yakovleva, 2006).

This tension (above) precipitates another equally hostile type of conflict. In a bid to protect their concessions from artisanal miners, large scale mining companies employ the services of private security agencies, whose personnel are poorly trained and their approach and conduct of policing these concessions have been unprofessional and unethical. Their actions have rather worsened the relationship between the companies and artisanal miners, creating undue tensions and confrontations, with varying degrees of injuries and even death (Ofosu-Mensah (2011). In a similar vein, mining companies and communities have solicited the assistance of the country's security forces in a bid to

curb the activities of these illegal miners. For instance, at Amansie Central in the Ashanti Region, after persistent appeals by residents, the assembly organised a swoop against those involved in illegal mining. The confrontation led to the arrest of some of the miners and the confiscation of their equipment (The Ghanaian Chronicle, 2014).

Conflicts between the Host Communities and Large Scale Mining Companies

Host communities have often clashed with mining companies because once a concession is obtained, any economic, religious or recreational activities carried out on the land ceases, unless permitted by the mining companies. It is worth noting that in recent times, conflicts between host communities and the large-scale mining companies have been on the ascendency and a matter of concern for both mining companies and the government. The mining policies in the country, equally, disfavours mining communities in their undertakings with these large-scale mining companies, a situation which according to Taabazuing et al. (2012: 34) seeks "to reinforce and perpetuate the country's natural resource paradox" and is manifested in conflicts and the lack of opportunities for the local population. The Concession Ordinance, which conferred unlimited power, rights and entitlements to the mining companies, paid no heed to the local people, who depend on the land for their livelihood. Unfortunately, because these concessions are found in the most fertile part of the community's land, the local people have consistently encroached on the concessions to engage in farming or mining and usually clash with the mining companies. The burgeoning literature on post-colonial gold mining related conflicts in Ghana reveal that "land use conflict and distribution of mining rents" have been the most profound (Ofosu-Mensah, 2011: 15). Significantly, Hilson (2002) and Andrew (2003) argue that land use conflict seems to be at the forefront of contemporary gold mining related conflicts, a far departure from the pre-colonial period, when gold was vital in the formation of states and the exercise of power, wealth and influence (authority). Contestation over extractive lands have been described as a 'battleground' between communities, who on one hand are poor, weak and marginalised but feel they hold legitimate rights per their heritage and on the other hand, the mining companies, who are well resourced (financially and legally) and with political backing. In a study at Obuasi in the Ashanti Region by Opoku-Mensah and Asare Okyere (2014: 66) suggest that "access to resources, ownership, use and degradation ……impact on social cohesion and cultural beliefs, human rights violations and distribution of risks and benefits and the meaning of development" have been the basis for the agitations between communities and large-scale mining companies.

In the opinion of Gyapong (2013: 2), mining related conflicts have bordered on "issues related to the rights of people, compensation, resettlement, corruption, excessive political clout and health and environment". He seems particularly fixated on the idea that on one part corruption and political influence in developing countries, especially Ghana, have led large-scale mining firms to neglect their social responsibility to the community and the environment. On the other the increased awareness of the community of the depletion of their resources and the effects of mining has led to clashes between

the mining companies and the local community. Owusu Koranteng (2005) fairly sums all the potential issues that lead to conflicts around mining communities in Ghana, when she cites Akabzaa (2000: 73-74), including:

- "Struggle for self-determination,
- Fair distribution of benefits of mining projects,
- Land use conflicts,
- Struggle against pollution and land degradation,
- Conflicts over compensation for land, crops, houses, etc.,
- Struggle for socio-cultural survival, and
- Struggle between small-scale miners and large companies".

Another major factor that has contributed to the conflict is the lack of transparency, accountability and poor communication (Hilson, 2004). Taabazuing et al. (2012) observe that the inability of the government and large-scale mining companies to offer sound reason and clarity on issues such as policies and revenues have been the precipitator of distrust between the stakeholders. Furthermore, there is the suggestion that the recent surge in tension brewing between the community and the large-scale mining companies has been due to the increasing awareness by the members of the community about the negative impact of mining in the community. This is not entirely surprising due to the proliferation of environmental NGOs and pressure groups like GTZ and WACAM in Ghana. Ofosu-Mensah (2011) citing a report by the Third World Network Africa (2001) recounts how tensions have arisen when sections of the community have become aware of their exclusion from compensation payments due to their interaction and association with these groups.

Conflict between Galamsey Operators and the Government

Due to the fact that galamsey activities in the country are illegal, the government in an attempt to halt their activities has intermittently unleashed the military and Anti-galamsey Taskforce on these miners. Aside the criminalisation of their activities, which is undertaken in contravention of the Small-Scale Gold Mining Law (PNDCL 218), galamsey miners have through the use of mercury, dynamite and cyanide caused a lot of environmental damage to water bodies and the forest. Furthermore, communities often entreated the government to stop the galamsey miners due to the havoc they cause their farms and houses and the surge in social vices. Aubyn (2006) asserts that in the 1980s the government organised a series of raids on the galamsey sites, especially in Prestea, Obuasi, Tarkwa and parts of the Eastern Region. Commonly referred to as "scatter", these raids have led to the brutalisation of galamsey miners and the destruction of their properties. Another case in point is the passionate appeal by the Managing Director of AngloGold Ashanti to the Regional Security to eliminate the activities of illegal miners on their concession. Hostilities between the company and the illegal miners have degenerated to the point where both groups have armed themselves. A feature

article depicts the rather grim situation where galamsey operators attacked security officers in the Bosomtwe Forest Reserves in the Ashanti Region, resulting in the hospitalisation of the officers and the seizure of their weapons.

Interestingly, while these three (3) categories are unique and extensive research has been undertaken in this endeavour, the literature on conflicts among the stakeholders in the gold mining sector pays scant attention to conflicts between mining communities and small-scale miners. Indeed, in his discussion, Ofosu-Mensah (2011) passably mentions it – a clear demonstration of the lack of research into this type of conflict, while Nyame and Blocher (2010) believe that the relationship between the mining communities and small-scale miners is anything but conflictual. However, media reports have given credence to rise in hostilities between the two. For instance, the Daily Guide (2013) reported that a section of youth at Ayieim, a farming community in the Mporhor District of the Western Region, demonstrated against their chief for permitting the operations of galamsey miners and threaten to deal with miners if their activities are not curtailed.

Conclusion

While there is no denying that the current boom in gold mining in Ghana, especially the surge in artisanal and small-scale mining and the resultant increasing spate of conflict due to issues such as land disputes and loss of livelihood, the southern parts of the country, where the majority of the gold deposits are found, has been the least volatile. This however does not in any way mean that gold related conflicts have eased. On the contrary, while these conflicts have been pervasive, they have not been as destructive in comparison with conflicts in the north of the country. It is also worth mentioning, despite the prevailing spate of conflict within the mining sector, there have been several attempts among stakeholders to smoothen their relationship. Though the introduction of these measures has somewhat failed because of its top-down approach, stakeholders have not relented in their efforts to broker peace as well as bring sanity into the mining industry in Ghana.

Appendix 2: Sample Interview Guide

A) Respondents Background Data

1. Age of Respondent
2. Sex
3. Educational Level
4. Marital Status
5. Language Proficiency (Host)
6. Ethnic Background / Region of Origin

B) You and Your Work

1. Where do you live?
2. When did you move here? Where were you living previously?
3. Before moving here, which job were you engaged in?
4. How long have you been a miner? Were you engaged in any activity when you migrated to this community before turning to artisanal mining?
5. What would you say motivated you to become a miner?
6. Did you choose from a variety of options on where to go? What sources of information influenced your decision? What kind of support did you receive, if any in your decision to migrate?
7. I would like to know how you were recruited into this mining camp.
8. What is your current work? Can you give a brief account of your activities?
9. Do you believe that your activities have an impact on the community? Can you elaborate on the specific ways?
10. Does the influx of immigrants have any effect on community facilities and usage?

C) About Your Relationships

1. What is the nature of your relationship with other members of your camp? Are there rules that regulate how you relate with other miners? Who sets the rules?
2. How do you specifically relate to miners who come from the community?
3. What is your relationship with members of the community? Do you have any engagement with them?
4. Have you had any opportunity to partake in any traditional activities and cultural practices of the community? To what extent are the host's cultural and social practices similar or different your community of origin? Have they determined how you involve yourself with the community?

5. Have you experienced any form of discrimination in the course of your activities since migrating to this community? If so, can you please specify?
6. Are you aware of any ascriptions or labels given to immigrants? If so, how have you been affected by it?
7. How do you perceive the members of your host community? E.g. the desire to keep to themselves / distance themselves from migrants ASM groups?

D) Conflict and its Resolution

1. Have you personally had any disagreements/disputes with a member(s) of the community? If yes, have they been related to your activities? Can you identify the interest and positions of those involved?
2. What are the issues that generate conflicts between members of the community and miners? What have the issues been about specifically? To what extent is the exploitation of gold {*by immigrants*} driving conflicts?
3. Moving further, do you perceive that these conflicts have arisen mainly because the miners are not from the community?
4. Have there been other factors that have led to conflicts other than the reason that you are not from the community? Can you give further clarifications?
5. Have there been instances of competing claims between artisanal and small-scale miners and the community for access to mining sites? Are there other ways that conflicts manifest? Can you indicate the level of violence?
6. Would you say that disputes, hostilities and conflicts have been started by groups or individuals?
7. Do you think that the lack of rules and clearly defined rights have brought about most of the conflicts? If so, who would you blame for this?
8. How does conflict impact on your activities? Give specifics.
9. What structures and mechanisms exist for effective resolution of these conflicts? Were these measures based on formal or informal approaches?
10. In your view, do you believe that these measures have been successful? In what ways and specifically what was achieved.
11. What lessons have you learnt from these conflicts?
12. What do you believe can help reduce the occurrence of conflict between migrants and indigenes, for instance, intermarriages, political party affiliations?
13. Does how often you interact with or live close to members of the host community help reduce the level of tension and hostilities? Given the choice will you prefer to live among fellow migrants or mix with members of your host community?
14. In the following instances, which option would you prefer and why:

Communicating in your own language in the host community	
Communicating in your host language	
Keeping own culture and way of life	
Adopting the culture of the host	

15. What ideas do you have to improve collaboration within the community and lessen conflict?

E) General Questions

1. Now if we can go back a little, in your view who has the right to mine for gold?
2. Do you think you have the same right as people who were born here?
3. Have the local people given you any reason or cause to believe you are taking/exploiting what is rightfully theirs?
4. How are such actions expressed and how have you been affected by them?
5. Has the government played any role as part of your work?
6. Do you receive any help from non-governmental groups? Has the support been targeted at minimising conflicts and maximising peace? Which group has received most interventions or support?
7. Given these experiences and exposure to conflicts, what other career would you have preferred and why?
8. What has been the good and the bad in migrating to this community to undertake galamsey? Expectations…….and Reality……...?
9. Have you ever considered returning to your own community? If so, why?

Appendix 3: Sample Pictures from Fieldwork